

THE HURRICANES IN HAITI: DISASTER AND RECOVERY

HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

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THE HURRICANES IN HAITI: DISASTER AND RECOVERY

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2008

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:11 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Eliot L. Engel (chairman) presiding.

Mr. ENGEL. Good morning. A quorum being present, since Mr. Delahunt and I are very important, the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the Foreign Affairs Committee will come to order. I am told Mr. Burton will be a little bit late. We are going to begin before he comes, which he has agreed to.

I am pleased to welcome everyone to today's hearing on the "Hurricanes in Haiti: Disaster and Recovery." This is an emergency hearing. Some of our colleagues who have just come back from Haiti have spoken with me, and we all put our heads together and thought that this would be a good time to do this hearing to, hopefully, try to put a little pressure on the Congress and other powers that be that we need more aid for Haiti, and we need it now.

This has, obviously, been an extraordinarily difficult year for Haiti, from food riots to a lengthy inability to select a Prime Minister and, most recently, to the devastation by four hurricanes and tropical storms: Fay, Gustav, Hanna, and Ike. Haiti deserves a break, to say the least.

The devastation from these storms has been massive. To date, more than 420 people have been killed by the storms and flooding, more than 10,000 dwellings have been destroyed, and more than 151,000 people have been displaced from their homes. Eight agencies in Haiti are warning of severe outbreaks of disease as thousands of people remain in squalid, cramped shelters.

Relief workers in Gonaives, which was hit the hardest by the storms, have struggled to reach thousands of people who fled to higher ground. Because the hurricanes brought down bridges, 30 percent of that town remains inaccessible, making approach only possible by helicopter and boat. Houses there which were not destroyed by the wind, rains, and flooding were swamped under two to three feet of mud.

In several regions, agriculture has been left in ruins, leaving hundreds of thousands in need of food, water, emergency housing, and health services for at least the next 6 months.

The disaster has compounded an already difficult situation for the new government of Prime Minister Michele Pierre-Louis and further demonstrated the fragility of Haiti's physical and social infrastructure.

According to the U.N. Special Envoy for Haiti, Hedi Annabi:

"This is a humanitarian catastrophe of a scale that is beyond the capacity of the government or of the United Nations stabilization mission here. It requires an exceptional effort from bilateral donors, from those countries in the region or beyond that have the kinds of assets that are required to deal with such an emergency."

Even before the most recent emergency, the United States already had a very large aid program in Haiti. This year alone, we are providing more than \$270 million in assistance, including \$45 million in food aid, in response to the crisis earlier in the year.

However, given the scale of the recent calamity, it is obvious that more help is now urgently needed. The U.S. is now delivering almost \$30 million in additional emergency aid, and the *USS Kearsarge*, a large-deck helicopter carrier, is anchored off the coast of Gonaives, with large helicopters delivering provisions.

MINUSTAH, the United Nations peacekeeping mission, is doing what it can to preserve the peace and maintain order, but it will not be able to keep the lid on forever if people have nothing to eat. As of September 17th, just last week, a total of 1,042 metric tons of emergency food commodities had been distributed to more than 245,000 people, and while that is notable, it, quite simply, is not enough.

At this subcommittee's hearing 1 week ago, International Crisis Group Senior Vice President and Special Adviser on Latin America Mark Schneider cautioned that while the U.N. is calling for \$100 million in immediate, life-saving relief aid, and I quote him, "a massive recovery and reconstruction plan is required and likely to cost closer to \$1 billion."

This would involve repairing, rebuilding, and refurbishing the economic infrastructure, schools, and health clinics, making up for lost harvests, and replacing irrigation systems and farm-to-market roads. A Herculean task, no doubt.

Since one more storm might just be enough to push Haiti over the edge, we must do more. Given that these types of catastrophes are happening in Haiti with unfortunate regularity, the international community needs not only to have a plan in place to manage a future crisis, but we must preposition stocks of food and other supplies in the region.

I am interested to learn from our Government witnesses today what we are doing to prepare for the next crisis.

Along those lines, we need to help Haiti reforest the hillsides right away so the next tropical storm does not create the intense flooding the previous four have. By focusing on the most problematic watersheds, with labor-intensive reforestation, we could take three key steps at the same time: Environmental restoration, flood minimization, and unemployment reduction.

It is my hope that the subcommittee will explore many of these questions today. I am particularly looking forward to hearing the

reports of my colleagues who have particular expertise and years of experience working to help Haiti. I urge the administration officials who will soon be testifying to consider carefully what my colleagues who will testify have to say.

I am also looking forward to the testimony by the administration to learn more about our relief efforts and how we are working to avert, but at the same time planning for, the next crisis.

Given United States disaster-relief efforts in Central America after Hurricane Mitch and our past efforts in Haiti and the Caribbean, I would also like to hear from the administration why we are not quite as prepared to deal with the current disaster as we should be.

Finally, our third panel will certainly round out our view of the crisis with an elected official's sense of the impact on the Haitian-American community.

I will now, with that, call on my friend, Mr. Delahunt, for his opening statement.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Engel follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ELIOT L. ENGEL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

A quorum being present, the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere will come to order.

I am pleased to welcome you to today's hearing on "The Hurricanes in Haiti: Disaster and Recovery." This has been an extraordinarily difficult year for Haiti. From food riots, to a lengthy inability to select a prime minister, and, most recently, to the devastation by four hurricanes and tropical storms, Fay, Gustav, Hannah, and Ike, Haiti deserves a break, to say the least.

The devastation from these storms has been massive. To date, more than 420 people have been killed by the storms and flooding, more than 10,000 dwellings have been destroyed, and more than 151,000 people have been displaced from their homes. Aid agencies in Haiti are warning of severe outbreaks of disease as thousands of people remain in squalid, cramped shelters.

Relief workers in Gonaives, which was hit the hardest by the storms, have struggled to reach thousands of people who fled to higher ground. Because the hurricanes brought down bridges, 30% of Gonaives remains inaccessible, making approach only possible by helicopter and boat. Houses in Gonaives which were not destroyed by the wind, rains, and flooding were swamped under two to three feet of mud. In several regions, agriculture has been left in ruins, leaving hundreds of thousands in need of food, water, emergency housing, and health services for at least the next six months. The disaster has compounded an already difficult situation for the new government of Prime Minister Michelle Pierre-Louis and further demonstrated the fragility of Haiti's physical and social infrastructure.

According to the U.N. Special Envoy for Haiti, Hedi Annabi, "This is a humanitarian catastrophe of a scale that is beyond the capacity of the government, [or] of the UN stabilization mission here. It requires an exceptional effort from bilateral donors, from those countries in the region, or beyond, that have the kind of assets that are required to deal with such an emergency."

Even before the most recent emergency, the United States already had a very large aid program in Haiti. This year alone, we are providing more than \$270 million in assistance, including \$45 million in food aid in response to the crisis of earlier in the year.

However, given the scale of the recent calamity, it was obvious that more help was urgently needed. The U.S. is now delivering almost \$30 million in additional emergency aid, and the USS Kearsarge, a large deck helicopter carrier, is anchored off the coast of Gonaives with large helicopters delivering provisions.

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Since one more storm might just be enough to push Haiti over the edge, we must do more. Given that these types of catastrophes are happening in Haiti with unfortunate regularity, the international community needs not only to have a plan in place to manage a future crisis, but we must preposition stocks of food and other supplies in the region. I am interested to learn from our government witnesses today what we are doing to prepare for the next crisis.

Along those lines, we need to help Haiti reforest the hillsides right away, so the next tropical storm does not create the intense flooding the previous four have. By focusing on the most problematic watersheds with labor intensive reforestation, we could take three key steps at the same time: environmental restoration, flood minimization, and unemployment reduction.

It is my hope that the Subcommittee will explore many of these questions today. I am particularly looking forward to hearing the reports of my colleagues who have particular expertise and years of experience working to help Haiti. I urge the Administration officials who will soon be testifying to consider carefully what they have to say.

I am also looking forward to the testimony by the Administration to learn more about our relief efforts and how we are working to avert, but at the same time planning for, the next crisis. Given US disaster relief efforts in Central America after Hurricane Mitch and our past efforts in Haiti and the Caribbean, I would also like to hear from the Administration why we are not quite as prepared to deal with the current disaster as we should be. Finally, our third panel will certainly round out our view of the crisis with an elected official's sense of the impact on the Haitian American community.

With that, I would like to call on the Ranking Member, Mr. Burton, for his opening statement.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I look out at this group of our colleagues, I have traveled to Haiti with many of them. I remember traveling with Mr. Hastings and with the former senator from Florida, Bob Graham. I remember visiting the former Prime Minister, who I consider a hero, in a hospital where he was unfairly incarcerated—I refer to Mr. Yvon Neptune—with Maxine Waters, and I, obviously, am aware of Mr. Meek's recent trip and his efforts. But each and every one of these Members has been a strong advocate for Haiti.

I think it is clear that we can do better for Haiti—it has had such a tragic history—especially when we consider that, last week, we approved, in this committee, a \$1-billion assistance program for another nation, Georgia, in the aftermath of that conflict between Georgia and Russia; a war, by the way, in which it is clear now that Georgia launched the first assault, despite an urgent plea buy our own Department of State not to do so.

As far as I can tell, that \$1-billion figure was pulled out of the air. There does not appear to be any substantial analysis as to needs that was done by the administration. It was announced so quickly that I think it caught many of us off guard. But we were told that monies could be found in existing accounts. No new money was going to be necessary, at least for the initial phase.

So we know that there is money out there, and yet we are talking about \$30 million for Haiti. That does not compute. It just does not compute.

I think you indicated, Mr. Chairman, and certainly it has been reported multiple times in the media, that Haiti desperately needs assistance to avoid mass hunger and, yes, starvation.

To quote President Preval, "These storms amounted to a Katrina for the entire island." For the entire island.

You referenced a \$1-billion figure in your opening statement, Mr. Chairman, but our own USAID administrator, Henrietta Fore, had this to say in a recent report: "This will take billions of dollars, underscore billions, not a billion, but billions of dollars."

By the way, I know that USAID, the Coast Guard, our Embassy personnel on the ground there are doing extraordinary work. I want to commend them for their efforts. But it is not enough.

More resources have to be devoted because what is occurring on that island is a true humanitarian disaster underway. The disparity in relief between that which we are willing to do for Georgia and that what we are talking about doing for Haiti is unacceptable. More people are facing disease and hunger 200 miles from our shores than in a country halfway around the world. More Haitians will risk their lives, and probably lose them, as they attempt to flee that desperate humanitarian situation.

By the way, more people have died in Haiti than died in that brief conflict, tragic as it may be, in Georgia.

Now, I understand the concerns about Haiti's Government, the Haitian Government's ability to absorb assistance. I have been to Haiti often enough and am familiar to know that that state has profound limitations. But there are other avenues to ensure that that assistance arrives to Haiti and is used effectively and efficiently.

By the way, where would we be today without the United Nations? Where would the Haitian people be without the United Nations and MINUSTAH working on the ground, for those who consistently castigate the United Nations?

We have a moral obligation to help Haiti, a fragile democracy that has suffered a terrible disaster, and we should send more assistance now.

I thought it was interesting that the Vice President, Mr. Cheney, went to Georgia to announce that assistance. I would recommend that the Vice President find the time to get on a plane and fly to Haiti and make a similar announcement. With that, I yield back my time, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for this opportunity, and welcome my colleagues.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. Sires for a short opening statement.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you very much. Welcome. I am also here to show my support and make sure that we do everything we can. I have happened to have taken a trip, during the last hurricane in the Dominican Republic, and visited Jimani, which is right on the border of Haiti, and the need there is just beyond. I still do not think they have an accurate count of what happened, with the floods and everything else in that area.

So I think that we should do whatever we can do to help these people. I think it is our duty, a close neighbor of ours. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sires follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ALBIO SIRES, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Thank you Mr. Chairman for holding today's hearing.

As we discuss ways to best help Haiti today, I think it is important to keep in mind the hard work currently being done by Haitian officials and U-S aid organizations, the non-governmental communities, and concerned citizens in response to the devastating storms.

Unfortunately, the problems faced by Haiti are not limited to the hurricane season. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, and even before the storms, Haiti was experiencing a food crisis.

I am pleased to join the subcommittee today to not only shed light on the pressing needs of Haiti, but also the need for foreign assistance reform, as this subcommittee discussed last week. Through considerable reform and increased financial support for Haiti and the Western Hemisphere in general, we can provide more development options, better coordination and substantial results.

I am pleased to be joined with some of my colleagues today that have recently visited Haiti, and I am eager to hear their firsthand accounts.

Thank you.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Sires.

It is now my pleasure to welcome our colleagues on the first panel who are here. I want to acknowledge that the Haitian Ambassador, Raymond Joseph, is also here. I want to welcome him as well. I have worked closely with him on a number of things involving Haiti.

We will call on our colleagues and on our witnesses in the order of seniority, and it makes me very frightened that Ms. Waters is going to go first because she has the most seniority. But it makes me very frightened, when I have more seniority than anybody on the panel. I must be doing something wrong or right. I do not know what it is, but it is a little bit frightening.

So I welcome all of my colleagues. Many of you have been to Haiti many times, some of you have just come back, and many of you have been leaders in this Congress in terms of calling attention to Haiti. I know that Congresswoman Waters has a letter circulating, which I was proud to sign, calling for massive aid to Haiti, so we will start with my friend, Congresswoman Maxine Waters of California.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MAXINE WATERS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Ms. WATERS. Thank you very much. I would like certainly to begin by thanking my colleague and friend, Eliot Engel, the chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, for inviting me and my colleagues to testify at this hearing on "The Hurricanes in Haiti: Disaster and Recovery."

I am truly honored to be here, and this is so important, and I am very appreciative. I, of course, have traveled to Haiti many, many times, and I have seen the poverty and the pride of the Haitian people with my own eyes. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and has suffered through several natural disasters.

In September 2004, Hurricane Jeanne pounded Haiti with torrential rain. The storm caused extensive flooding, destroyed at least 5,000 homes, and killed more than 1,000 people, but no past storms or other experiences can compare to the storms that hit Haiti over the last month. Haiti has been struck by four hurricanes

and tropical storms in rapid succession: Fay, Gustav, Hanna, and Ike.

Severe flooding, landslides, wind, and sea surge damage has affected the entire country. The Government of Haiti estimated that 600 people have been killed and an additional 850,000 have been affected by the storms. According to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), more than 10,000 houses have been destroyed, and more than 35,000 houses have been damaged. There are more than 150,000 internally displaced persons in Haiti.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), up to 800,000 people, almost 10 percent of the population of Haiti, are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. OCHA also reported that the entire harvest for the current agricultural season has been severely damaged or destroyed. Many roads and bridges have also been damaged or destroyed.

Almost all agricultural land in the country has been flooded. There is a desperate need for food, clean water, and health services. Immediate international assistance is critical to save lives and rebuild homes and infrastructure. OCHA issued an appeal for \$108 million to provide humanitarian and early recovery assistance to survivors over the next 6 months.

According to Hedi Annabi, the United Nations' special envoy to Haiti, the scale of the disaster has overwhelmed both the United Nations mission and the Haitian Government. He called on the international donor community to take extraordinary measures to address the situation. Annabi reported that the damage in the agricultural sector alone is estimated at more than \$200 million. He also said, "The people have lost everything in the floods and the cleaning and the reconstruction work will be enormous and very costly."

The Embassy of Haiti has provided my office a detailed list of needs. The list is varied and includes portable bridges, patrol boats, life jackets, rehabilitation of major ports, water pumps, water pipes, and sewage cleanup supplies.

The Haitian Government is also seeking a total of 2,265 agricultural tool kits. The kits are to be distributed throughout the country in order to begin the process of restoring the agricultural sector. Each kit would include shovels, rakes, soil tillers, wheelbarrows, flashlights, batteries, boots, raincoats, and other items.

These items may not seem expensive to us in the United States, but to supply such basic items to farmers throughout the country is well beyond the current capacity of the Haitian Government. Yet without these simple tools, it is unlikely that the people of Haiti will be able to grow their own food long after the floodwaters recede.

On September 11th, I sent a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi requesting an emergency appropriation of \$300 million for disaster assistance to Haiti, and 67 Members of Congress signed my letter.

In a recent conversation with Mr. Delahunt—who, too, has spent a lot of time on this Haitian issue, not just this disaster but over the years, looking at and dealing with the political problems of visiting and dealing with the false imprisonment of the Prime Min-

ister, on and on and on—had a conversation with me about the money that had been requested for Georgia and that the administration recently requested \$1 billion in development assistance for Georgia.

A mere fraction of that amount would help thousands of hungry and displaced Haitians survive and begin to rebuild their communities. Haiti's needs are at least as great as Georgia's, and Haiti is an impoverished island nation just south of American shores.

So I would urge the members of the subcommittee to support my request for \$300 million in disaster assistance to Haiti.

I deeply appreciate the opportunity to testify at this hearing, and I commend the members of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere for their interest and all that they are doing to deal with the needs of Haitian people.

Let me just close, Mr. Chairman, by saying, I, in one of my visits to Haiti, I was there at the celebration of the bicentennial where I took a helicopter up to Jimani that is now underwater and may be destroyed. That is the site where Toussaint Louverture really fought off the French, this proud, little nation who rebelled, the first in the world against slavery.

These are proud, hard-working people. We have people who get up in Haiti every day pushing wheelbarrows and lifting bricks and moving dirt who are earning \$1, \$1.50, maybe \$2 a day, but they have the will to survive, and I so much honor their tenacity and their will to survive and their willingness to work hard, and I would hope that we could do something.

This appropriation is desperately needed, but if we did no more than target the \$1 billion, and Mr. Delahunt may be aware, \$476 million of that is scheduled to be expedited right away. If we could even access \$100 million of that, that would be very helpful in moving this appropriation along, with more work to be done for the other 200 or whatever, you know, authorization you guys would come up with.

But the whole idea is we cannot wait. We have to get this done, and we have to do it soon. Thank you so very much for having me here today.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Waters follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MAXINE WATERS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

I would like to begin by thanking my colleague, Eliot Engel, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, for inviting me to testify at this hearing on "The Hurricanes in Haiti: Disaster and Recovery." I am honored to be here.

I have traveled to Haiti many times, and I have seen the poverty and the pride of the Haitian people with my own eyes. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, and it has suffered through several natural disasters. In September of 2004, Hurricane Jeanne pounded Haiti with torrential rain. The storm caused extensive flooding, destroyed at least 5,000 homes, and killed more than 1,000 people.

But no past storms or other experiences can compare to the storms that hit Haiti over the last month. Haiti has been struck by four hurricanes and tropical storms in rapid succession: Fay, Gustav, Hanna, and Ike. Severe flooding, landslides, wind and sea surge damage has affected the entire country. The government of Haiti estimated that 600 people have been killed and an additional 850,000 people have been affected by the storms. According to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), more than 10,000 houses have been destroyed and more than 35,000 houses have been damaged. There are more than 150,000 internally displaced persons in Haiti.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), up to 800,000 people—almost 10 percent of the population of Haiti—are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. OCHA also reported that the entire harvest for the current agricultural season has been severely damaged or destroyed. Many roads and bridges also have been damaged or destroyed. Almost all agricultural land in the country has been flooded. There is a desperate need for food, clean water, and health services. Immediate international assistance is critical to save lives and rebuild homes and infrastructure. OCHA issued an appeal for \$108 million to provide humanitarian and early recovery assistance to survivors over the next six months.

According to Hedi Annabi, the United Nations' special envoy to Haiti, the scale of the disaster has overwhelmed both the United Nations mission and the Haitian government. He called on the international donor community to take extraordinary measures to address the situation. Annabi reported that the damage in the agricultural sector alone is estimated at more than \$200 million. He also said, "The people have lost everything in the floods and the cleaning and the reconstruction work will be enormous and very costly."

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I deeply appreciate the opportunity to testify at this hearing, and I commend the members of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere for their interest in the needs of the Haitian people.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Congresswoman Waters. As I mentioned before, you have certainly been a leader in the fight to get aid to Haiti, and I was proud to sign your letter.

I might also add that both you and Ms. Lee traveled with me to Haiti. I was only chairman-elect, I guess. We had won the election, but we had not yet taken over, and it was the very first trip that I made as chairman, or prospective chairman, of this subcommittee to Haiti, and both of you were invaluable on that trip, so thank you very, very much.

Congressman Hastings of Florida, who also, for many years he has been a leader in all things Haitian, and, of course, his district in South Florida, I know because, as he knows, my mom and dad lived in his district for many years. He has many, many people from Haiti in the district, and so I welcome you, Congressman Hastings.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ALCEE L. HASTINGS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, Chairman Engel, and my compliments to you and your colleagues, Mr. Delahunt and Mr. Sires, and other members of the Western Hemisphere Sub-

committee for holding this extremely important hearing today. I am honored to be here.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to just mention some of the people who are not here, but I am sure that the extraordinary work that they have done is also noticed by the world community as well—Chairman Rangel, Chairman Conyers, Congressman Meeks, who is different than my colleague, Meek, from New York—people that are no longer here: Cynthia McKinney, for example, did an awful lot of work in this area; former Senator Bob Graham, and Senator Nelson on the other side and the other body has done an awful lot.

In my two extraordinary manifestations of gratitude, I do not wish to overlook the United States State Department, USAID, SOUTHCOM, and the significant number of nonprofit organizations, and, more recently, the Archdiocese in Miami, weighing in very heavily for the matter that I wish to highlight.

I also kind of see this as a hemispheric problem, and while we talk about Haiti, I also am mindful that there are other countries in the Caribbean Basin who suffer living in “Hurricane Alley,” and we should not leave them unnoticed as well.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask that my full statement be inserted into the record.

Mr. ENGEL. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. HASTINGS. I would also, Mr. Chairman, like to that a point of personal privilege. As you well know, and others, I was the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Mr. Delahunt mentioned Georgia. I had an awful lot of involvement, including the lead monitoring of their Presidential elections.

Very occasionally, it does unnoted in this body that there are international bodies who have interests, and, today, there are 62 members of the OSCE who are here in preparation for observing the United States elections in November. One of those members is from the Netherlands, and she has a continuing interest, and I would like to introduce to all of us, in the hopes that we will hear more from her since the Antilles are a sister country to the Netherlands and close to Haiti’s interests, but I would like for you to meet a member of the Parliament of the Netherlands, Kathleen Ferrier, who is here with us as well.

Mr. ENGEL. Let me just say, we, of course, welcome our guests, and thank you for gracing us with your presence.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you. It would take decades, Mr. Chairman, for a wealthier, more stable nation to recover from challenges similar to those facing Haiti. However, Haiti also lacks, and Ms. Waters points out, the physical and economic infrastructure necessary to protect its citizens from natural disasters. Any development efforts are further stunted by the constant crises and turmoil affecting the nation.

I believe that there should be a special task force, for example, you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, on reforestation. Some of the best experts in the world are in the United States of America. They need to be sent there as a team, working in coordination with others on that significant problem.

While Haiti's humanitarian crisis becomes increasingly dire, and the nation's struggle for economic stability and sustainable development is further delayed, it is now more imperative than ever that the United States grant Haitian immigrants temporary protected status. TPS, granted for a designated period of time and subject to renewal, would halt deportation and grant work permits to most of the estimated 20,000 Haitians believed to be currently residing in the United States illegally so that they can legally contribute to Haiti's economic recovery.

I am skipping a lot of my testimony, Mr. Chairman, to point to President Preval, who explained to President Bush, in his request, that Haiti has long been victim to persistent poverty, political turmoil, and environmental destruction. TPS is the least-expensive, most-immediate form of humanitarian assistance we can provide Haiti. It allows the Haitian Government to invest all of its limited resources in rebuilding and redevelopment.

I also, Mr. Chairman, call on the Immigrations and Customs Department (ICE) to stop deporting people to this country for this period of time. Though I am encouraged by the United States' willingness to provide humanitarian aid to Haiti, emergency assistance will only go so far. Haiti needs a comprehensive, sustainable solution to put it on a path of long-term stability, and I believe that TPS is a necessary part of that solution. We have done TPS, Mr. Chairman, for Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, and even Somalia. There is absolutely no excuse for us not to grant Temporary Protective Status to Haitians.

I commend you for your commitment to the Haitian people, you and your colleagues, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for bringing attention to this continuously struggling nation. Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hastings follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ALCEE L. HASTINGS, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Thank you, Chairman Engel and Representative Burton for holding this extremely important hearing today. I am honored to be here.

As you well know, in less than a month's time, Haiti has been ravaged by not one, but four natural disasters. Roads and bridges have been wiped out, leaving many communities isolated and only accessible by air. Fields and crops have been flooded, obliterating the nation's meager domestic food supply. Over 850,000 individuals have been affected with 423 people reported dead, over 150,000 people internally displaced, and nearly 40,000 homes have been damaged or destroyed.

It would take decades for a wealthier, more stable nation to recover from challenges similar to those facing Haiti. However, Haiti also lacks the physical and economic infrastructure necessary to protect its citizens from natural disasters. Any development efforts are further stunted by the constant crisis and turmoil affecting the nation. The tragedies of the last few weeks have shown us that by our refusal to take substantive action, we not only leave the Haitian government vulnerable to greater political instability but we also increase the likelihood of human and physical loss from the probable event of future natural disasters.

I have long been an advocate for issues affecting Haitians, both in Haiti and in our own country. This past April, I offered an amendment to the Jubilee Act that unanimously passed the House of Representatives. My amendment called for the immediate cancellation of Haiti's international debt. I am also the author of H.R. 522, the Haitian Protection Act, a bill currently under consideration by the Judiciary Committee. This bill would direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to grant Haitian immigrants currently in the United States Temporary Protected Status (TPS). Though I believe passage of this legislation is imperative to Haiti's short and long-term stability, it must also be stressed that TPS is a designation the Administration can grant on its own prerogative without the direction of Congress.

As Haiti's humanitarian crisis becomes increasingly dire and the nation's struggle for economic stability and sustainable development is further delayed, it is now more imperative than ever that the United States grant Haitian immigrants TPS. TPS is the least expensive, most immediate form of humanitarian assistance we can provide Haiti. It also allows the Haitian government to invest all of its limited resources in rebuilding and redevelopment.

Under Section 244(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1990, TPS may be granted when any of the following conditions are met: there is ongoing armed conflict posing a serious threat to personal safety; it is requested by a foreign state that temporarily cannot handle the return of nationals due to environmental disaster; or when extraordinary and temporary conditions in a foreign state exist which prevent aliens from returning. Now, more than ever, Haiti meets all of these conditions.

As Haiti's President René Préval explained in his February 2008 letter to President Bush formally requesting TPS, Haiti has long been victim to persistent poverty, political turmoil, and environmental destruction. The deportation of Haitian nationals in the United States only increases the burden on this small nation's already stressed economic and political system. TPS, granted for a designated period of time and subject to renewal, would halt deportations and grant work permits to most of the estimated 20,000 Haitians believed to be currently residing in the United States illegally so that they can legally contribute to Haiti's economic recovery.

It is important to note that TPS would not, as some may suggest, lead to a mass influx of Haitian migrants. TPS only applies to individuals who arrive in the United States before the designated date. Perhaps most significantly, there was no major increase in immigration levels after the U.S. granted approximately 50,000 Haitians Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) in 1997 in anticipation of the passage of the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 1998.

The United States has rightfully acknowledged and supported the efforts of other nations to return to a sense of normalcy by granting and extending their TPS. At the same time and under equally dire conditions, Haitian migrants have not received similar treatment.

Just 600 miles from our shores, political and economic instability in Haiti impacts our own economy and immigration levels, thereby making it our responsibility to work to ensure Haiti's long-term stability. Haitians, both in Haiti and in our own country, have long suffered through natural destruction, persistent poverty, repressive regimes, and the inequitable policies of the United States. It is now our moral obligation to help Haitians sustain and rebuild their country by granting Haitian nationals already residing in the United States TPS.

While I am encouraged by the United States' willingness to provide humanitarian aid to Haiti, emergency assistance will only go so far. Haiti needs a comprehensive, sustainable solution to put it on a path of long-term stability, and I believe that TPS is a necessary part of that solution. Otherwise, we will be back here again, year after year, trying to pull Haiti out of another crisis.

I commend you for your commitment to the Haitian people and thank you for bringing attention to this continuously struggling nation. I look forward to working with you on this very important matter.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Congressman Hastings, who, for many years, served on the Foreign Affairs Committee until he moved on to bigger and better things, making all of the rules for us. Thank you very, very much.

I want to acknowledge we have been joined by our colleague, a very valued member of the subcommittee, Congressman Donald Payne of New Jersey, and it is now my pleasure to call on Congresswoman Barbara Lee. Congresswoman Lee also, as I mentioned before, traveled with us to Haiti on the very, very first trip, since we knew we were going to be in the majority and the chair. She has a very important bill called "Next Steps for Haiti," and I am very interested in hearing about it. Congresswoman Lee?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE BARBARA LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Ms. LEE. Thank you very much, and thank you, Chairman Engel, for your leadership, and I thank the subcommittee for this hearing and for all of your leadership on issues relating to the Caribbean. Yes, Chairman Engel, I was very proud to be with you on your first visit as upcoming chair to Haiti because you made the Caribbean a priority and have sought to see some parity in our foreign policy as it relates to the Caribbean.

So I just want to thank you for continuing to lead on this issue, and I also want to thank all of my colleagues for testifying this morning and for their leadership and for their hard work over so many years, oftentimes being the lone voices in the wilderness, as it relates to what we need to do with regard to supporting the Haitian people.

Let me just say, first, as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and a former member of your subcommittee, Mr. Chairman, like all on this panel, I visited Haiti many, many times since, really, the 1970s, and, you know, oftentimes we think we are making some progress, in terms of what our country is doing to support that country, its people, and then we see natural disasters and other disasters take place, which set us back.

So let me just offer a few thoughts on the crisis in Haiti caused by the recent hurricanes and draw some comparisons to the situation in Grenada after Hurricane Ivan in 2000, and let me just offer some potential long-term solutions, with regard to this bill, at least, one solution to address some of the systemic problems in Haiti.

The situation in Haiti is dire, as all of our colleagues are reiterating, and, like much of the Caribbean and the United States, the recent hurricanes have really devastated Haiti. The storms caused massive flooding, mudslides, damaged infrastructure, destroyed bridges, and led to hundreds of deaths. Most of the port city of Gonaives, the second-largest city after Port-au-Prince, remains underwater. Although the destruction of Gonaives is probably the most visible, the damage in Haiti extends far inland, into the mountainous and rural areas throughout the Central Plateau.

As the water began to subside, the people of Haiti are now struggling with the spread of both airborne and waterborne diseases. Cases of malnutrition in children are rising, as reports indicate that there is not enough food to feed the hungry, and access to clean water is scarce. Clearly, the people of Haiti are in need of emergency assistance.

The Government of Haiti has specifically asked for \$400 million in aid to help in the wake of the disaster, and, in addition, President Preval has asked for, at least, 25 helicopters with pilots to help the country get food to storm victims in remote areas, and, again, President Preval has, as have Congressman Hastings and others on the panel, called for the United States to grant Temporary Protective Status for Haitians in the United States.

By helping Haiti with these requests, we can stand right now in solidarity with its people during this difficult time, and, yes, I am very pleased that we have already offered about \$29 million in humanitarian assistance to Haiti, but much more is needed.

I have to thank Congresswoman Waters for taking the lead in asking for, at least, \$300 million to assist the people of Haiti to rebuild, but also I agree with Mr. Delahunt and Ms. Waters that, you know, there is no way that we should not ask for more money right now, given what we just did, in terms of Georgia. This huge gap and disparity has got to be closed, and I think we have a prime opportunity to do that right now. So whatever it takes, Congresswoman Waters and Mr. Chairman, we need to do that, and we need to do that immediately before we leave this week.

So, as a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, I would like to work with you to try to figure out a strategy that, as we move this Georgia bill forward, we can figure out how to make sure that Haiti is provided the resources that it needs, in addition to the \$30 million that we are providing.

Also, let me just say, I am going to be introducing a resolution expressing support for Caribbean countries devastated by the hurricanes and calling for emergency humanitarian assistance, just as we did after Hurricane Ivan. I look forward to working with the committee on this.

As we move to act in Haiti, again, we have to remember what happened, and what we did after Ivan in 2004. Back then, there was a disconnect between the rest of the Caribbean countries and the United States. However, following the devastation in Grenada, we brought together, in a bipartisan way, a way to build stronger ties to the Caribbean region and to provide disaster-relief efforts.

We also delivered \$100 million in disaster assistance to the Caribbean, but, with that \$100 million—I believe Grenada received probably close to \$50 million, but we required that money to be used in 1 year.

I led a codel to Grenada after that, and the Grenadians did a phenomenal job in that year in using that money and rebuilding the country, but I do not believe, and I hope we do not put any restraints on the resources that we will be providing to Haiti because I know that a year is not enough time for the emergency assistance to be utilized in an effective manner.

Also, you mentioned the bill, which, I think, most members of the panel are co-sponsors of, in terms of “Next Steps for Haiti,” and let me just mention, really, the purpose of this legislation—hopefully, next year, it will move—is to make sure that Haitian-Americans and others provide technical assistance to help Haiti improve in areas vital to its growth and development, which may include education, energy, environment, healthcare, infrastructure, security, transportation, and disaster-preparedness assistance. We have got to really expedite and rev up our efforts in providing help for disaster preparedness.

So this is H.R. 6255, the “Next Steps for Haiti Act.”

Also, let me just mention, when we talk about long-term solutions, and we have worked, on this subcommittee, for many years to try to figure out how to enhance educational exchanges between students in the Caribbean, especially in Haiti, and the United States. So, hopefully, we will be able to move out of the Senate this year the Shirley Chisholm U.S.-Caribbean Education Exchange Bill.

So, finally, let me just say, in closing, we need a comprehensive strategy to assist the Caribbean, especially Haiti, now to recover from these natural disasters on an immediate, emergency basis, but we also need to use these windows of opportunity to help with the long-term sustainable solutions, and so all of the Members of this panel and your subcommittee, Mr. Chairman, have some ideas, I think, that need to move forward as quickly as possible.

In my district, and I say this all of the time, we have a slogan where we say, "Let Haiti live." Now we are saying, "Let Haiti survive first, and let Haiti live."

Thank you again. This is part of that effort, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate the chance to be with you today.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Lee follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE BARBARA LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Thank you Chairman Engel and Ranking Member Burton for your leadership on issues vital to the needs of the Caribbean people. I also want to thank Chairman Berman, for allowing me to testify.

I want to commend all of my colleagues who have joined me to testify today. And I want to thank the staff, particularly Jason Steinbaum for organizing this hearing.

As a member of the Foreign Affairs committee and a former member of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to be here with you.

I will briefly offer my thoughts on the crisis in Haiti caused by the recent hurricanes and draw some comparisons to the situation in Grenada after hurricane Ivan in 2004. I also want to offer some potential long term solutions to address some of the systemic problems in Haiti.

As my colleagues have mentioned, the situation in Haiti is dire. Like much of the Caribbean and the United States, the recent hurricanes have devastated Haiti.

The storms caused massive flooding, mud slides, damaged infrastructure, destroyed bridges, and led to hundreds of deaths.

Most of the port city of Gonaives, the second largest city after Port-au-Prince, remains under water. Although the destruction of Gonaives is probably the most visible, the damage in Haiti extends far inland to the mountainous and rural areas throughout the Central Plateau.

As the water begins to subside, the people of Haiti are now struggling with the spread of both air and water-borne diseases. Cases of malnutrition in children are rising as reports indicate that there is not enough food to feed the hungry and access to clean water is scarce.

Clearly, the people of Haiti are in need of emergency assistance.

The Government of Haiti has specifically asked for \$400 million in aid to help in the wake of this disaster. In addition, President Preval has asked for at least 25 helicopters with pilots to help the country get food to storm victims in remote areas.

President Preval has also called for the United States to grant Temporary Protective Status (TPS) to Haitians in the United States.

By helping Haiti with these requests, we can stand in solidarity with its people during this difficult time.

I am pleased that we have already provided approximately \$29 million in humanitarian assistance to Haiti, but much more is needed.

I join my colleague Maxine Waters in calling for at least \$300 million to immediately assist the people of Haiti to rebuild.

As a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations, I am working with my Chairwoman, Nita Lowey, to ensure that the United States provides urgent humanitarian assistance to Haiti.

I will also be introducing a resolution expressing support for Caribbean countries devastated by the Hurricanes and calling for increased emergency humanitarian assistance to help them recover. I look forward to working with the Committee on this important measure.

As we move to act in Haiti, I am reminded of our efforts to assist Grenada to rebuild in the wake of Hurricane Ivan in 2004.

Back then, there was a disconnect between the rest of the Caribbean countries and the United States. However, following the devastation in Grenada, we worked together in a bipartisan way to build stronger ties with the Caribbean region to provide disaster relief.

We coordinated meetings with CARICOM diplomats about disaster relief and recovery efforts in the aftermath of the hurricane season.

We worked with USAID and the State Department congressional liaisons to find out what support was being offered and what resources were needed to assist the region.

We unanimously passed in the House a bi-partisan resolution—H. Con. Res. 496, calling for increased emergency assistance to the Caribbean.

As a result of these efforts, we delivered \$100 million in disaster assistance to the Caribbean.

Afterwards, I helped lead a Committee CODEL to Grenada to assess the damages on the ground and to identify long-term policy solutions to the problems it faced.

As we work to provide assistance to Haiti, I am pleased that the Committee has taken many of these same actions. While we deliver urgent support to its people, we must also identify long term solutions to Haiti's problems.

In May of this year, Congresswoman Kilpatrick and I led a congressional delegation to Haiti to examine some of these problems, particularly the impact of soaring food prices.

At that time, Haiti was still recovering from last year's hurricanes and we feared what might happen if another storm hit Haiti before the rebuilding process was complete.

It was clear to us, that Haiti's food shortages, severe deforestation, poor sanitation, lack of family planning and healthcare services, high unemployment, and underdeveloped agriculture could not be solved by emergency assistance alone.

That is why, working with Chairman Engel, I introduced H.R. 6255 the Next Steps for Haiti Act of 2008. This bill will provide technical expertise and build human capacity to help Haiti address its own problems.

Many Haitian Americans living in the U.S. have technical expertise in areas such as agriculture, education, health care, and infrastructure development, and want to return to Haiti to assist their people. My bill creates a mechanism to transfer this knowledge in order to meet the needs and goals of Haiti.

Beyond that, we need to ensure that we find innovative ways to build human capacity through education exchange programs, like those I have proposed in H.R. 176, the Shirley Chisholm U.S.-Caribbean Educational Exchange Bill.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your help and the Committee's efforts in passing this bill through the House last year. It is currently awaiting action on the Senate Floor and I hope we can pass it before we adjourn.

In closing, I believe that we need a comprehensive strategy to assist the Caribbean to recover from these natural disasters.

I also believe that we have a responsibility to examine our own role in the crises that Haiti currently faces. Specifically, I believe we should examine the February 2004 Coup and ouster of President Aristide. I hope that the committee will consider my bill H.R. 351, The Truth Act.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to answering any questions.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you very much, Congresswoman Lee. We, again, appreciate your hard work.

Our next colleague is Congressman Kendrick Meek of Florida. Congressman Meek called me from Haiti, just last week, where he was with Congresswoman Clarke and Congresswoman Edwards, and has really been the driving force of saying that, in the week before we leave, something has to be done, and one of the major reasons I called this hearing was because of my conversations with Mr. Meek.

Let me also say that I believe that he has the largest contingent of Haitians of any district in the United States living in his district. In my district, in Spring Valley, New York, we have a very large Haitian-American community, but I know that Mr. Meek's district, that is probably, I believe, the largest in the country. So, Congressman Meek of Florida.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE KENDRICK B. MEEK, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Mr. MEEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you and this committee for calling this meeting, this hearing, in the last week of our session. With so many issues that are facing our own country, Haiti is definitely a part of our history and has assisted us in our independence.

Also, to my colleagues that sit on this panel, many of whom have put in a lot of sweat equity in making sure that we do the best for the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, I want to echo some of the sentiments of my colleagues that have spoken about the urgency of dealing with Haiti.

This morning, I had a phone meeting with Ambassador Sanderson, the U.S. Ambassador that is there, and I wrote down: "The situation is very dramatic on the ground right now." This is almost 2 to 3 weeks after the storm.

The emergency trip that took place last week with Congresswoman Clarke of New York and also Congresswoman Edwards of Maryland was one that was planned within hours because of the reports we were getting out of Haiti. If it was not, Mr. Chairman, for the fast response of Admiral Stavrides and the Southern Command, the situation could be a lot worse in Haiti.

The *Kearsarge*, which was able to divert from another mission and respond within 24 hours after the last storm went through Haiti, made it possible to save lives. I know that Rear Admiral Kernan is here, a representative of the Southern Command, and we had an opportunity to visit with him and the crew of that ship. They should be commended for their work that they are still undergoing at this time.

Mr. Chairman and committee members, right now, the situation in Haiti is pretty bad, but we do know that the international community is there. We had a great meeting, just the other day, with all of the members here on this panel, including yourself, Mr. Chairman, and others, and Mr. Delahunt from your committee, Chairman Delahunt. We had, of course, Ambassador Joseph, who is here with us today, the Ambassador of Haiti, and also the Ambassador to the United States from Brazil, France, Canada, and also the EU. All of us hold a vested interest in the forward progress in Haiti.

If we do not take advantage of the international community being there, a standing Government in Haiti, which, hopefully, the parliamentary elections will take place to get a full Senate place and do it right this time, we may find ourselves having a security situation in Haiti.

The 82nd Airborne has been deployed into Haiti twice in recent years. It has cost U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars.

The U.S. Coast Guard that has put a blanket around Haiti to make sure that we do not have boats or smugglers that are coming into South Florida has spent quite a bit of money and resources dealing with trying to stop that from happening, when we have a flow of drugs that is coming out of Haiti and other Caribbean nations that are there that we could be focusing on.

Mr. Chairman I think the work of this committee is very, very important. This hearing, for the record, is very, very important, but

the emergency appropriation, as has already been stated, is very important to the forward progress.

In April, we know that there was a food uprising in Haiti that was the only one in the Western Hemisphere because of the price of food. I traveled to Haiti and had an opportunity to see food on the streets, but Haitians could not afford it.

Right now, the food situation is basically the United States is providing a lot of the food that is there and the international community, but now we are going to have a situation, in 3 to 4 weeks, where there will not be any food because the breadbasket of Haiti was wiped out around the Gonaives area, and we are going to have a desperate situation there, and that is the reason why the appropriation is very, very important.

The last point I want to share with you: Congressman Hastings talked about the Temporary Protective Status for Haitians. Haiti over qualifies, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for Temporary Protective Status. I have to drop my head sometimes, when I am talking with Prime Minister Preval and also when I have to face my constituents in South Florida, about Temporary Protective Status.

There is really no reason why. It is hard to even put it in words, why Haiti has not been granted Temporary Protective Status. Not only have several members of this panel written the President—we are probably into the hundreds of letters that have been written—of why Haiti should be granted Temporary Protective Status.

There was a phone conversation last week, late last week, because ICE was preparing to return Haitians to Haiti, and, from the religious community to the advocacy community and Members of Congress, it was really a sad, sad occasion because we, literally, hands and knees, had to beg not to put this burden on the Haitian Government; even though it was a few, it was just the principle of it.

The Temporary Protective Status issue needs to be addressed, should be addressed. It is temporary. It does not give Haitians permanent status here in the United States, but it does show that we recognize what the President has asked for, President Preval, who is at the U.N. right now, who will be meeting with President Clinton and the Global Initiative, along with former Prime Minister Tony Blair, to talk about the assistance situation that is needed in Haiti.

Also, Mr. Chairman, I think it is important that your committee moves to set up a special office, as we did after the tsunami that hit, set up a special office to coordinate philanthropic efforts that may be undertaken here in the United States so that Americans will be able to share in the responsibility that we have to make sure that Haiti is able to stand on its own two feet.

So thank you so very much, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Meek follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE KENDRICK B. MEEK, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for calling this important hearing to so that we may put a spotlight on the devastation in Haiti from hurricanes Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike and the ongoing humanitarian aid efforts.

As many of you know, I represent the largest Haitian community outside of Haiti. Haiti sits only 600 miles from our shores and the security, political, and economic activities in Haiti not only affect my district in particular, but also our entire country. As one can imagine, when four hurricanes hit Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, within a 22 day period, I felt that on behalf of Congress, I had to act.

On September 12th & 13th, I led a Congressional Delegation trip to the Republic of Haiti and was joined by two of my colleagues, Congresswoman Yvette Clarke (D-NY) and Congresswoman Donna Edwards (D-MD). Our goals for this trip were to detail the U.S. relief efforts, to talk to President Preval and Prime Minister Michèle Pierre-Louis about a comprehensive needs assessment that we could share with other interested legislators and our local officials, and to bring back a sense of hope for the Haitian American community that progress is being made.

As we toured the hardest hit areas, the devastation we witnessed that weekend was unimaginable. In certain regions of Haiti the local infrastructure has been completely overwhelmed as floodwaters submerged the ports and airports, and virtual lakes formed over the roads. As hard hit cities such as Gonaïves became isolated, Haitians were forced to live on their roofs for weeks because disaster relief became extremely problematic.

Thankfully, Haiti is not alone. Before Hurricane Ike had even hit Haiti, the US and International donor communities were preparing their relief efforts. In Haiti, I witnessed, first hand, the bravery and dedication of our USAID and military workers working side by side with members of the international community to provide much needed relief. I was particularly proud to see the involvement of Southcom through the relief efforts on the USS Kearsarge. The USS Kearsarge has provided assistance on medical and engineering projects, as well as the continued logistical support to remote areas of Haiti that were heavily damaged by the recent tropical storms. This kind of support is invaluable due to the extreme difficulty in providing these coordination efforts.

Upon returning from this trip, my priorities have been set on pressing for emergency supplemental disaster relief funding for Haiti, to increase the pressure on the Administration to provide Temporary Protective Status for Haitians, to mobilize local U.S. government officials, and to work with the Haitian Diaspora to augment assistance efforts already underway.

Last week, we held a meeting between Members of Congress and the Ambassadors from major donor nations in Haiti to discuss the ongoing relief efforts and to consider what additional resources may be provided going forward. At this meeting the Ambassadors from Haiti, France, Brazil, the European Union and Canada a representative from the Department of State met with Members to openly discuss their various aid efforts and the challenges they have met. One positive result was a general sense that aid efforts may need to be better coordinated. The United States, as a leader in providing humanitarian aid, should improve the synergy between the various private and public disaster aid efforts as well as lead coordinating efforts with our various international partners so that aid distribution is delivered more effectively.

I have also joined with Rep. Hastings the others in the South Florida delegation to ask for Temporary Protected Status for Haitians. This status is long overdue for the thousands of taxpaying Haitian nationals who live every day with the threat of deportation. As the most industrialized nation in the world, we have a moral obligation to protect those who came to the U.S. seeking economic and political stability at a time when Haitian life was very precarious. Through the ongoing economic struggles and the extraordinary toll that recent natural disasters have inflicted on the island, Haitian nationals more than qualify for TPS.

Lastly, I have joined with Chairwoman Waters to call for emergency appropriations for Haiti. We must not forget that the hurricane season is not over yet. Much of Haiti's small but burgeoning agricultural sector has been hit particularly hard by the hurricanes and it was only six months ago that Haiti was mired in the middle of a hunger crisis. It is essential that we provide the necessary funding to assist in keeping the costs of living in Haiti stable.

As a close friend and ally of the United States since the Revolutionary War we must continue to provide the necessary support to help get Haiti back on their feet. While Haiti has struggled to pull themselves up from the depths of decades of economic and political instability, they have incredibly strong and capable leadership. Through MINUSTAH and President Preval's leadership, stability has been restored to much of the country, most gang activity has been driven out of Port-au-Prince's notorious slums, and the Haitian government has forged ahead with a comprehensive plan for economic growth. Still, this year's hurricane season has threatened much of this progress; we must not waver on our support for Haiti.

Again Mr. Chairman, I thank you for calling this hearing today and look forward to the testimony of the witnesses on the importance of providing substantive aid to Haiti.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Meek.

I am going to ask Congressman Sires to take over the chair. I have just been called to a vote in my other committee, and I will be back. But before I do that, I want to introduce Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, who, like me, comes from New York City. I think I have the second-largest Haitian-American community, second largest in New York. Congresswoman Clarke has the largest in Brooklyn, New York, and so welcome, and I look forward to what you have to say.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE YVETTE D. CLARKE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Ms. CLARKE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, to Ranking Member Burton, in absentia, to all of the members of the committee, to my colleagues on the panel. It is not a mystery to any of you here that I am of Jamaican descent and a child of the Caribbean region, and to see for myself what our sister nation, Haiti, has had to endure, the long suffering of Haitians, is something that is epic in proportion.

Let me pause a moment to just thank Chairman Thompson, who commissioned my ability to get on this codel, as a member of the Homeland Security Committee, and also Chairwoman Kilpatrick of the Congressional Black Caucus, who was also a collaborator in this effort, and say that I want to amplify everything that my colleagues have already stated.

What I witnessed, as part of this codel, is unbelievable. The devastation of this nation cannot be put or captured by words. To fly, by helicopter, over Gonaives and see rushing water rushing into the village weeks after the storms have passed; to see the trails of water falling down the sides of the mountains, still rushing into communities, into neighborhoods; to see areas where mud has stacked up two to four feet high and people trying to live their daily lives as though this is something that is the status quo is a reason for alarm.

To fly over Artibonite, which is the breadbasket of Haiti and see the entire crop covered by water with livestock dead, carcasses, lying in the same water, and then to fly over further and see people bathing and washing in the same water, we know that this is a humanitarian crisis.

So there is no mystery here, and the only mystery is how we respond. I would say that the international community has stepped up to the plate, but it really requires a much more aggressive action. It requires sustained attention.

We live in episodes in the United States of America. Our attention span is very short, but, day by day, life is at stake in Haiti. It is a fragile nation. It is a fragile nation where the people struggle each and every day just to survive. The average living age for a female in Haiti is 56 years old, and, for men, 53. We have a young nation here, and this nation deserves our attention.

I want to join with Representative Maxine Waters in calling for \$300 million in emergency appropriations for Haiti. I think that that is just the flash point of what is needed right now. We know that sustainable development is ultimately the goal.

So we need to look at the Third Border Initiative and find out whether it is substantive or just ceremonial. The Third Border Initiative was an initiative where we were establishing a real relationship with the Caribbean region. This assistance would help Caribbean governments prepare for natural disasters through technical improvements to the region's disaster early-warning and communication systems. That has yet to be put in place. This is unacceptable.

On the issue of Temporary Protected Status (TPS), I am amplifying the call. How could we not? Would we want that to be the situation for us here, were we in Haiti's shoes? I doubt that. I doubt that. We would be looking for the mercy of other nations and not expecting them to compound the misery under which we are trying to survive.

Then Homeland Security. You have already heard my colleagues talk about desperation, the desperation of people.

So you have a choice: Do you stay in your nation, perhaps drown by rushing water, perhaps contract some sort of an airborne or waterborne disease and wither away while people stand down and not assist you? Or do you take to the seas and take your chances, try to get to another nation where life exists abundantly?

These are the choices that Haitian people have today, and we have to wake up tomorrow morning and ask ourselves a question. We have to ask ourselves whether we can stand down and see humanity wither away, as though it were Atlantis, or whether we are going to stand up, as a nation of goodwill, and extend our arms to a nation within our hemisphere and be a part of the rebuilding of this nation?

What a wonderful thing it would be if, during our lifetime, that we could truly say that the Congress of the United States extended itself, its goodwill, to Haiti in triumph over extreme poverty and despair in our hemisphere. I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Clarke follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE YVETTE D. CLARKE, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

SITUATION ON THE GROUND

Before Tropical Storm Fay, Hurricane Gustav, Hurricane Hanna and Hurricane Ike blew ashore, Haiti was experiencing incredibly difficult times. As the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, 80% of Haitians were living in poverty, with more than half living in abject poverty. Haiti already had the lowest standard of living on this side of the globe and hunger was widespread. Then the quick succession of four major storms over the span of three weeks turned an already bad situation worse.

According to USAID, 850,000 people in Haiti have been affected by these storms. Thus far, USAID estimates that 423 people have been killed and 50 remain missing. Over 150,000 people have been displaced and almost 50,000 homes were damaged or destroyed. Of the 850,000 people affected by the storms, the World Health Organization estimates that 442,000 are women, 24,000 are pregnant women, and 306,000 are children. These are people who were vulnerable before the storms and are now even more so.

I had the opportunity to travel to Haiti on September 12 following Hurricane Ike with my colleagues Reps. Kendrick Meek and Donna Edwards to assess the situation on the ground. We saw extraordinary damage there caused by flooding when we flew over Gonaives and Artibonite. People in Gonaives were living on their roofs as water was still rushing through their neighborhoods. In places where the water had receded, two to four feet of thick mud was left behind. In Artibonite, dead livestock were floating in the same water the people were using to bath in. Haiti is a country in crisis right now. President Rene Preval told us, "This is Katrina in the entire country, but without the means that Louisiana had."

The United States is doing a tremendous job assisting Haiti in their recovery following the recent storms. The amount of United States humanitarian assistance given to Haiti is approaching \$30 million. The USS Kearsarge is docked in Port au Prince and is serving as a logistical and medical staging area. U.S. military personnel and other officials are doing much of the heavy lifting there in terms of the recovery and I was proud to have the opportunity to meet with them while we were there. The USS Kearsarge recently extended their mission for as long as they are needed in the region, which is good news, because there is much more that needs to be done.

To further illustrate how much of a challenge the recovery efforts will be, this past week Haiti experienced heavy rains, which endangers recovery efforts. There are also ten more weeks left in the Atlantic Hurricane Season and I am fearful of what Mother Nature has in store for Haiti in the coming weeks. I am hopeful though, that the recovery effort in Haiti can keep ahead of any storms to come. We can assist by reinforcing Haiti's infrastructure and putting in place an early warning system in the near future to reduce the loss of life and damage to the country.

REBUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

Haiti's infrastructure is the number one issue facing the country right now. The president, prime minister and ambassador emphasized this point to us in meetings in Haiti and Washington. Eight of the country's ten geographic regions were flooded. The floodwaters washed away roads and bridges, isolating parts of the country. Many roads and bridges are still impassable, weeks after the latest storm hit.

While the infrastructure needs to be rebuilt, emergency measures need to be taken immediately. Haiti needs temporary bridges to reach areas isolated by floods, like Gonaives. Emergency aid cannot get to the people who need it unless there are bridges. I cannot stress enough how important it is for Haiti to receive temporary emergency bridges.

After the emergency measures have been taken and the most pressing needs of the people met, Haiti can then take this opportunity to rebuild in a sustainable way. There will be hurricanes in the future, and it is likely that they will be more powerful than ever seen before. We, as Haiti's neighbor, need to help our neighbor transition into a future of stability and prosperity. But Haiti will continue to be ravaged by external factors, like hurricanes and food prices, unless they can rebuild their infrastructure. Roads and bridges need to be built to last—they need to survive mudslides and flooding. Floodwalls and levies could hold back rising waters and protect low-lying areas. The forests need to be replanted, so the topsoil will hold the rainwater and prevent flooding. The people of Haiti need clean water and modern sewage systems.

Haiti cannot rebuild its infrastructure with an eye to the future without help. We can provide Haiti with the assistance to do so, not only with monetary support, but with the expertise of our agencies. If we commit to helping Haiti in this way, we can be sure that we will not see the destruction on the same level that we have seen in Haiti during the last decade.

FOOD CRISIS

In 2008, the perfect storm of high energy costs and commodity expenses erupted in a food crisis in Haiti. People rioted because of widespread hunger, and many people were forced to start eating mud cakes to stave off the hunger. Because much of Haiti's food is imported, the country is especially vulnerable to world commodity prices, which have skyrocketed in recent months.

The rice crop was especially important to Haiti and just before it was time to harvest the crop, it was wiped out when the storms hit the country. When we visited Haiti we flew over Artibonite, where many of these crops are grown, we saw widespread destruction and the loss of not only rice crops, but mangos and plantains as well. These rice crops were destroyed at the worst possible time: when the country was looking forward to an influx of food and after Haiti's farmers had already in-

vested the capital in the crop. Next season's rice crop is now in danger as well, because the farmers do not have the means to invest in the next crop.

The crop losses Haiti experienced leaves the country even more heavily dependent on foreign imports, as prices around the world continue to rise. At markets throughout Haiti, prices for basic food have more than doubled since the storms hit.

Haitian farmers are especially vulnerable to natural disasters like the ones we have seen in the last month. The United States needs to help Haiti strengthen its agricultural sector, a part of the economy that two-thirds of all Haitians depend on.

POLITICAL INSTABILITY

This past April, the rising cost of food in Haiti led to political unrest. Riots broke out and killed seven people, including a U.N. Peacekeeper. The riots collapsed the government and led to the dismissal of Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis from office.

Haiti was without a head of government from April until September 5, 2008, when the new prime minister was installed after months of deadlock. Prime Minister Michele Pierre-Louis came into office in the midst of this disaster and has admitted that she is in a vulnerable situation. She fears she may be forced from office unless her country receives more help. Haiti needs a stable government to lead the country out of its prolonged crisis and this government needs the backing of the United States to stabilize.

IMMIGRATION ISSUES

The Haitian Diaspora has brought over 450,000 Haitians to our country, including about 200,000 who are not citizens. Over 47,000 of my constituents of my district in Brooklyn, NY are of Haitian descent or came to Brooklyn directly from Haiti. The remittances these immigrants send back to their homeland account for nearly a quarter of Haiti's gross domestic product (GDP). That is more than double what the country earns from exports.

One thing the United States can do to immediately help our neighbor stabilize is grant Haitians living in the U.S. Temporary Protected Status (TPS). TPS would allow Haitians living in the U.S. to work legally so they can send money back home.

TPS can be granted when a foreign state requests it because it is unable to handle the return of its nationals because of a natural disaster and Haiti certainly qualifies. President Rene Preval wrote to President Bush in February requesting him to grant Haitians TPS to help his country recover from storms that hit in previous years, like Tropical Storm Noel in 2007 and Hurricane Jeanne in 2004. President Preval explained to the President Bush that TPS, "would enable my government to concentrate its limited resources upon economic and political reconstruction instead of having to provide social services to (deportees)." TPS can also be granted to a country if there are temporary and extraordinary circumstances on the ground that prevent aliens from returning, another condition that Haiti satisfies.

TPS is not a pathway to citizenship or permanent residency—it is exactly as its name would imply—temporary. When TPS expires when the situation on the ground in the country is more stable, the status aliens in our country changes and they can return home or face deportation. There is a long history of granting TPS to countries after they face natural disasters: in 2001 President Bush granted TPS to Salvadorans after earthquakes hit their country. Haiti's current natural disaster is compounded by the instability the country was already facing because of extreme poverty and food insecurity. Granting TPS is the most inexpensive and immediate forms of aid we can extend to Haiti.

Whether or not the administration chooses to grant Haitian's TPS, we need to immediately halt deportations to Haiti from the U.S. It is unconscionable that we would choose to send an individual back to his home country when it is facing such a dire situation. It is a burden on the home country, which is trying to stabilize, and dangerous to the person facing deportation. I want to take this opportunity to call on Attorney General Michael Mukasey to immediately grant Haitians relief from deportations by granting them deferred enforced departure (DED).

EMERGENCY APPROPRIATIONS

I join my colleagues in requesting an emergency appropriation for \$300 million for disaster assistance in Haiti before Congress adjourns. In a letter to Speaker Pelosi, one of Haiti's champions, Rep. Maxine Waters, explained, "Haiti is already the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. It does not have the capacity to respond to the widespread death and destruction caused by the storms of this magnitude. Immediate assistance from the United States is critical to meet the emer-

agency needs of the Haitian people and to begin to rebuild damaged homes and infrastructure.”

HOMELAND SECURITY

As is the case with all countries around the globe, there is a strong correlation between America's security and the events occurring in neighboring countries just outside our borders. Sitting just off the coast of Florida, Haiti has long been an ally to the U.S., and is a partner on issues relating to drug interdiction and human smuggling. Because of its sizable population and proximity, Haiti has an important role in the future of a successful Third Border Initiative, ensuring that the Caribbean does not act as a portal into the U.S. from the outside world for those who wish to do us harm.

Our ability to have an effective partnership with Haiti to address these issues is dependent on having stability both within the government and within the greater society. During my recent trip to Haiti, I became greatly concerned that if things continue as they are without the support of our government, the country could potentially fall into a state of unrest that would both complicate our relationship with their government and breed the type of conditions that can lead to increased levels of international organized crime.

Another growing concern which may have a serious impact on our border security is the prospect of a mass Haitian migration caused by further natural disasters or worsening conditions on the island. Because Haiti is so close to American waters this is a possibility and, in fact, there is precedent for such an event, as the Coast Guard routinely finds Haitian refugees on boats and rafts attempting to make their way to Florida. While the Coast Guard has planned for the possibility of a mass Haitian migration of tens-of-thousands, this would create a very difficult situation for the Department of Homeland Security and could dramatically impact people in our coastal communities and in places like New York, which attracts high levels of Haitian immigrants. Therefore, speaking as a member of the House Committee on Homeland Security, I believe it is in America's best interest to ensure that stability is maintained in Haiti.

THIRD BORDER INITIATIVE

According to the Congressional Research Service, The Third Border Initiative (TBI) was introduced by President George W. Bush during the Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in April 2001, as a valuable framework for structuring our engagement across the broad spectrum of matters that affect the prosperity and well-being of the region and its peoples. The Bush Administration developed the Third Border Initiative in order to better focus the U.S.-Caribbean relationship and work with our partners on a number of capacity building tasks. The initiative recognizes the special significance of the Caribbean as an important partner of the United States and the Caribbean. The Third Border Initiative will strengthen the ability of Caribbean institutions to address social and economic problems, combat transnational crime, and promote regional security. Brian Nichols, director of State's Office of Caribbean Affairs, pointed to the "Third Border Initiative," established by the United States in 2001, as an example of U.S.-Caribbean cooperation in dealing with potential terrorist threats.

The objective of the Third Border Initiative is to focus U.S.-Caribbean engagement through targeted programs that compromise both new and ongoing activities designed to enhance cooperation in the diplomatic, security, economic, environmental, health, and education arenas without prejudice to additional areas of collaboration that may be agreed upon in the future. The Third Border Initiative provides the opportunity to focus funding and assistance on those areas where we see the greatest increased need.

Through TBI assistance, the United States will help Caribbean governments prepare for natural disasters through technical improvements to the region's disaster early warning and communication systems and ensure that disaster risk reduction and mitigation concepts are explicitly integrated into the regions economic planning and implementation. TBI funds will also help smaller economies move toward greater competitiveness by assisting targeted business sectors in the region meet the requirements for successful participation in the global marketplace.

The TBI must be fully funded and I have introduced a resolution to express how important it is for the TBI to be fully funded.

Thank you.

Mr. SIREN [presiding]. Thank you very much.

The chair will now recognize the Honorable Donna Edwards from Maryland.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DONNA F. EDWARDS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Ms. EDWARDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just echo my colleagues when I say my appreciation and gratitude to this committee for convening this emergency hearing on the current situation in Haiti.

I traveled to Haiti, as you know, with my colleagues here, Congressman Meek and Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, and I want to also extend my gratitude to Congressman Meek for stepping up to the plate to get us together right away in an emergency to go to Haiti and to make sure that we could see firsthand what was happening on the ground there and to my other colleagues who have had a longstanding interest and concern with Haiti over the years. I appreciate all of the hard work you have done, and I certainly join in supporting Congresswoman Maxine Waters' request for \$300 million in emergency assistance to Haiti.

While I am new to the Congress, I am not new to Haiti. I had previously been at a private foundation for 10 years, and we have had about a 20-year relationship at the ARCA Foundation with Haiti over the years, funding many different projects, some of them hit or miss, over the years, in Haiti, and including most recent efforts to try to document undocumented Haitians on the Dominican and Haitian border with the UNHCR.

So we know that Haiti has struggled, over the years, and I think that the recent hurricanes actually call us to action in a different kind of way, to think differently about Haiti and differently about the rebuilding of the country.

I just want to echo the statements of my colleagues today about the level of devastation that the island has experienced as these four hurricanes really tore through the country.

As we take action, in the closing days of this Congress, to help our fellow Americans recover from Hurricane Ike in Texas and Louisiana, and our hearts go out to those people who are without their homes and without electricity and water, even at this stage, we really cannot forget the pain and the suffering and the devastation of our southern neighbor, in Haiti. Haiti bore the wrath of not just this final storm, this last storm, Ike, but three previous hurricanes, and we are still at the early stages of the hurricane season. So the time for action, I believe, is really now.

I want to take a moment to just summarize some of the steps that we can take right now to deal with this crisis and to outline for you and try to articulate in words the images and accounts that we witnessed firsthand on the ground in Haiti, or, I should say, in the air, because so much of Haiti is inaccessible that we were not really able to get on the ground in the most devastated areas.

As Congresswoman Waters said, the United Nations is estimating that some 800,000 people, or probably 10 percent of the population, have been affected. The entire food crop, as we could see, was completely damaged and destroyed, and I thought we had

slides, but I am not sure whether they are up so that you can actually see the devastated areas, and they will just cycle through.

You can see the bridges that are destroyed, the roads that are destroyed, homes that, when you look down on them, people are living on the rooftops. But there are, as Congresswoman Clarke said, many, many feet of water and mud going through their homes. The damage to the crops is likely to have a substantial impact for several years because the topsoil has been destroyed and eroded. Just continue to cycle through.

You can see the water rushing through the streets in Gonaives. These are rice fields that are completely underwater, and you can imagine the number of years it is going to take to rebuild the agriculture sector in order to support food for the population. As Ms. Clarke was saying, there are carcasses in the rice fields where people were also bathing.

The transportation infrastructure in Haiti is completely decimated. Several major bridges are destroyed, and, just to give you an idea, I noticed that the water that overwhelmed the streets and the roads really has not settled and was still rushing, and we have actually had reports that there is still rushing water on the streets in Haiti. So the result, of course, is that thousands of people are left stranded and isolated.

In order to help these victims, we have to get Haiti the tools that they need most immediately, and they are most in desperate need, as you think about that \$300 million, and it seems like a lot, but the needs are really great: Boats, hold dries or ship-repair yards, small piers for landing stages, a rescue center, life jackets, portable bridges, and infrastructure funds to build new bridges. I understand that even some of the temporary bridges might not work because the outlying structures may not be able to even support a temporary bridge, so there needs to be serious rebuilding.

To help clear out some of the water and restore some normalcy, the Haitian Ministry of the Interior indicates that the country needs water pumps, water generators, and water pipes to siphon off all of that water. The ground is still unable to support helicopters landing, unable to support the kind of rebuilding that is going to be necessary for the infrastructure.

Of course, the short-term needs include medical assistance and temporary shelters for individuals who have lost their homes, and we need to put, as my colleagues have indicated, much more pressure on our own administration to grant Haitians in the United States Temporary Protective Status—it is just unacceptable—and the needs that have been laid out and demonstrated, not just now but over the years, are the reason that Temporary Protective Status is necessary for Haitians.

It is simply inexplicable why our Government has not acted, and so whatever this committee and this Congress can do to impress that upon the administration will be even more important as Haiti begins to stabilize.

We have demonstrated, obviously, the short-term needs, but we know that Haiti requires long-term investments as well, including the rebuilding of the infrastructure, reestablishing a manufacturing sector in Haiti, and investments in agriculture so that Haiti can produce its own food and sustain its population, and, of course, re-

forestation to protect Haiti from further environmental degradation.

The needs go deep, but if we do not address these needs and assist our southern neighbors in Haiti, there might be even greater impacts, both for this country and for the hemisphere, and, of course, for Haiti; to assist in providing and building civil society in Haiti to ensure long-term political stability.

Because I came out of philanthropy, I have actually pulled together a group of philanthropists in New York who will be meeting in the next couple of weeks to talk about what they can do, and maybe even in shorter order than what the Congress can do, to help out Haiti. But it is going to take a combination of the international community, the United States, obviously, and private philanthropy to give Haiti all of the tools that it needs to not just survive, as Congresswoman Lee has said, but to live.

So I thank you very much for your efforts, and I do appreciate the openness with which we were met by President Preval and Prime Minister Michele Pierre-Louis, who, I understand, actually comes out of civil society, one of the organizations that I was a colleague with, and I appreciate that, and thank you very much for your time today.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Edwards follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DONNA F. EDWARDS, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Thank you Chairman Engel, Ranking Member Burton and the other members of the Committee for inviting me here to testify at this very important hearing. It is an honor to be here today.

As we take action to help our fellow Americans recover from Hurricane Ike in Texas and Louisiana, we cannot forget the pain and suffering of our southern neighbors. Haiti not only bore the wrath of Ike, but also three additional hurricanes as they made their way through the Caribbean.

I went to Haiti with two of my colleagues here today, Congressman Kendrick Meek and Congresswoman Yvette Clark.

Today, I will echo some of the statements my colleagues have already made about the level of devastation that Haiti experienced after these four hurricanes tore through the island. I will also attempt to articulate the images and accounts that I witnessed firsthand that left an impressionable mark on my psyche. Finally, I will summarize some of the steps that we can and must take to help Haiti during this time of crisis, because if we do not act immediately to increase our assistance, the situation in Haiti will only worsen and possibly threaten internal stability and security in the hemisphere.

As some of my colleagues were saying previously this morning, the damage in Haiti is almost immeasurable. The United Nations says some 800,000 people, or almost 10 percent of Haiti's population, are in dire need of emergency assistance. I am focusing my testimony today on some very specific needs as articulated by the U.S. Navy, the Haitian Ministry of Interior and the U.S. mission in Haiti.

The entire food crop for the fall was destroyed by Hurricane Ike. Rice fields and other fields of crops were completely flooded. The damage to the crop will likely have a substantial impact for several years because the soil was also destroyed, leaving the island with very little salvageable agriculture to sustain itself. If we do not support the efforts to bring food assistance to Haiti, we could see an increasing number of Haitians dying of starvation and malnutrition.

The transportation infrastructure in Haiti is completely decimated. Several major bridges were completely destroyed and major roadways look more like rivers. To give the Committee and idea of how bad the situation is in Haiti, while there, I noticed that the water that overwhelmed these roads and towns had not settled and was still rushing. Even today, weeks after Hurricane Ike struck Haiti the U.S. Navy indicated that there are still some impassable roads and several other roads that are passable but with enormous difficulty. The result is that thousands of people are left stranded and isolated, some are still living on their roofs and aid is unable to reach them.

In order to help these victims, we must help Haiti get the tools they need most immediately. They are in desperate need of boats, hold dries or ship repair yards, small piers for landing stages, a rescue center, life jackets, portable bridges and the infrastructure funds to build new bridges.

Even in the areas of Haiti that assistance was able to reach, the situation was tragic. I witnessed people bathing in water that contained rotting animal carcasses because basic utilities such as water, sewer, and power infrastructure were completely destroyed.

To help clear out some of this water and restore some sort of normalcy, the Haitian Ministry of Interior indicated that the country needs water pumps, water generators, and water pipes.

Other short-term needs for Haiti include medical assistance and temporary shelters for individuals that have lost their homes. We also must put pressure on our own Administration to grant Haitians in the United States Temporary Protected Status. The needs I have laid out in my testimony are not exhaustive. Haiti has several other short-term needs but we would be shortsighted if we only focus on what this body can do in the short-term. We must also focus on the long-term needs in an effort to stabilize Haiti.

These long-term needs include investment in rebuilding infrastructure, reestablishing a manufacturing sector in Haiti, investments in agriculture so Haiti can produce the food it needs to sustain its population and reforestation to try to protect Haiti from further environmental degradation.

I support the efforts that President René Garcia Préval and Prime Minister Michèle Pierre-Louis are making to reach out to the international community in the next couple of weeks.

Before I close, I would also like to thank Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson for her tireless dedication and commitment. I would like to thank all of the humanitarian groups and aid groups that are currently in Haiti in an effort to assist the victims of these hurricanes. The work they do and have done is invaluable and in situations like the one in Haiti their work really does make the difference between life and death.

I offer a special thank you to the USS Kearsarge and specifically Captain Walter Towns, Commodore Fernandez "Frank" Ponds, and the Rear Adm. Joseph Kernan. They have been working tirelessly to bring aid to Haiti. I just found out yesterday that the USS Kearsarge will depart Haiti in a matter of days. It is imperative that their mission be extended until the communication lines have been established and until the Haitian government and aid organizations can access these remote areas by land. We should not turn our back on Haiti. We can afford to help Haiti, the real question is whether we can afford not to help.

I deeply appreciate this Committee's commitment to Haiti. I look forward to working with the Committee and all of the other Members here to help address the needs of Haiti.







Mr. ENGEL [presiding]. Thank you, Congresswoman Edwards. I thank all of you. This is truly a very distinguished panel, and I appreciate our colleagues testifying. I wanted just to give anybody an opportunity, if anyone wanted to comment on anything that anybody else said. If not, then I want to just acknowledge that Congressman Klein is here, or was here, and Congressman Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Chairman, I just want to make sure I have unanimous consent that my full statement be added to the record.

Mr. ENGEL. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. PAYNE. I will just be very brief. I just want to, since I was delayed and missed the first witness, Congresswoman Waters, I really did not have to hear what she was going to say because I knew what she was going to say anyway. She has been saying it for as long as I have been in the Congress, and I was even here before she got here, so I would just want to commend the members of this delegation and those who presented themselves.

This is extremely important. It is a struggle we have been dealing with for decades. It is an area where our hands, our fingerprints, are on that country that has had something to do with the lack of development there through the support of dictatorial powers, like Papa Doc and Baby Doc, and the lack of our Government, in the past, having positive programs to assist Haiti.

So I think we owe to Haiti responsibility. Haiti was involved in our fight for independence. Many Haitians died in, in particular, the Battle of Savannah back in the 1770s, and on and on. The whole question of the Louisiana Purchase, because of loss of France to Haiti and then, becoming cash poor and land rich, they were forced to sell the Louisiana Territory to the United States for practically nothing, which opened up the West, brought Lewis and Clark to St. Louis, and they went across the country.

So we are tied into each other historically. It is just the right thing to do. A billion dollars for Georgia for 1 million people, a pittance for Haiti, with twice the population, and our neighbors that have been involved, is not right.

So I support what you are proposing, and we certainly appreciate all of you. I have no questions for you, and we will be working very closely together. I will, once again, thank Chairman Engel for calling this hearing at this time.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

Before our colleagues go, Mr. Sires just had a brief question or statement.

Mr. SIRES. I just want to thank the members. I want to commend you for how quickly you have responded to such a difficult situation, how you picked yourself up, put everything else behind you, and you went to the area. I think it is very commendable that you are there today.

I know how important it is to you, and unless you have been to some of these areas, after this flood, I do not think you can capture how devastating it is. I saw boulders moved all over. It was just incredible, what I saw, and I am sure that that is the same thing that you saw. But I just want to commend you. It is terrific to say you are my colleagues. Thank you.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. I guess we will let that be the last word because those are my sentiments as well. It is an honor to serve with all of you, and thank you for coming here this morning.

In about 1 minute, we will proceed to our second panel, which are the administration witnesses.

[Pause.]

Mr. ENGEL. Okay. If our second panel could please take their seats, I think the names should be there. We are anticipating some votes in a little while, so perhaps we can get the testimony of our second panel in before the votes.

The subcommittee is very pleased to welcome our three witnesses: Kirsten D. Madison, who is the deputy assistant secretary of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs for the U.S. Department of State, welcome; José Cárdenas, who is the acting assistant administrator of the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau of USAID, welcome; and Rear Admiral Joseph D. Kernan, who is the commander of the U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command of the U.S. Fourth Fleet. Welcome, Admiral.

Let us start with Ms. Madison. Let me just say to our panelists, could you please summarize your testimony in 5 minutes or less, and, without objection, your official written testimony will go into the record as printed. Ms. Madison?

STATEMENT OF MS. KIRSTEN D. MADISON, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. MADISON. Thank you very much. We appreciate the opportunity to come before the committee.

Mr. ENGEL. Could you please put the microphone a little closer?

Ms. MADISON. Sure. Sorry.

Mr. ENGEL. We want to hear all of your words of wisdom.

Ms. MADISON. I will try and summon some.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and the other members of the committee for this opportunity to appear before you to speak about the situation in Haiti and about the administration's response to hurricane damage there. The administration certainly appreciates and welcomes this opportunity to hear your concerns and also to have a constructive dialogue with you about an issue that is very important, I think, to all of us.

As you know, in recent weeks, four successive storms ravaged Haiti. They also caused significant damage in Cuba and in Jamaica. The devastation in Haiti is widespread, with extensive damage to housing, agriculture, public infrastructure, and, of course, it inflicted significant suffering on the people of Haiti themselves.

The administration's response has been immediate, and it has been crucial. U.S. Government agencies, such as the Agency for International Development, the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Navy, and, of course, our Embassy team in Haiti have put forth an enormous effort to meet Haiti's immediate humanitarian needs in the aftermath of the storms.

We have already devoted more than \$29.5 million in emergency food and relief commodities which are now flowing, and will continue to flow, to the affected areas.

I will limit my remarks on the U.S. relief effort to this statement, since, frankly, you will have the opportunity to hear more detailed and in-depth descriptions from my colleagues from USAID and from Southern Command.

While we and other donors continue to address the immediate needs of Haiti's people, the administration is looking ahead simultaneously to determine the needs for the long-term reconstruction and rehabilitation in Haiti. Other international donors are also looking at reconstruction needs and their own resources, which is critical, given what we believe to be the extent of the impact on Haiti and its citizens.

We know that food security, already a concern before the storms and a priority in United States assistance efforts, has become even more fragile due to the extensive damage to Haiti's agricultural sector. Beyond that, Haiti's roads, bridges, airports, schools, and power grid have all been severely affected.

The starting point for the development of a comprehensive plan to help Haiti is an accurate and comprehensive assessment of the damages and what will be needed to reverse them. This process is already underway and involves the joint efforts of the United States and Haitian Governments, the international donor community, the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and other international relief agencies.

Once we determine needs, we will consult with Haiti's Government, as well as other major donors and partners, to ensure that the quickest and most effective recovery effort possible is underway.

Let me add that coordination among donors and partners in Haiti is ongoing, with frequent contacts between ambassadors, representatives of international financial institutions and relief agencies, and the government in Haiti. Other consultative mechanisms also facilitate coordination of support for Haiti, such as the Key Players Meeting, which will happen this week in New York, which Under Secretary for Political Affairs Bill Burns will chair. President Preval will attend that meeting, which is very important.

I would like to touch very briefly, as the committee requested, on the current political situation in Haiti. After 4 months of political turmoil the Haitian Parliament approved by the government of Prime Minister Michele Pierre-Louis on September 4th, even as the country felt the impact of Hurricane Gustav.

Prime Minister Pierre-Louis and her government do not have anything approaching a honeymoon period. They began work amidst a crisis that continues today.

The support of Haiti's friends and partners will be invaluable to Prime Minister Michele Pierre-Louis' government, as it seeks to address the crisis caused by the storms and the very real needs that Haiti had prior to the hurricane season. Economic development, good governments, democratic development, security, and humanitarian needs still must be addressed.

As you know, these program areas are all part of our ongoing efforts in Haiti, which, at \$234 million in Fiscal Year 2008, remains one of the largest assistance programs that we have in the Western Hemisphere.

In addition to Secretary Rice's own conversation with President Preval, our Ambassador in Port-au-Prince, as well as U.S. senior visitors, such as Under Secretary Henrietta Fore, have already reach out to the Prime Minister to assure her of our support and commitment to Haiti.

I think I will stop there and let my colleagues, Mr. Cárdenas and Admiral Kernan, brief you on the details of the U.S. response, and I look forward to answering your questions upon their completion. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Madison follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MS. KIRSTEN D. MADISON, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY,
BUREAU OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and other members of the Committee for this opportunity to appear before you to speak about the situation in Haiti and Administration's response to hurricane damage in Haiti. The Administration appreciates and welcomes the Committee's concern. We look forward to a constructive dialogue with you as we seek the way forward.

In recent weeks, four successive storms ravaged Haiti and caused significant damage in Cuba and Jamaica. The devastation in Haiti is widespread with extensive damage to housing, agriculture, and public infrastructure and infliction of significant suffering on the Haitian people.

The Administration's response has been immediate and crucial. U.S. Government agencies, including the Agency for International Development, the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Embassy in Haiti, have put forth an enormous effort to meet Haiti's humanitarian needs in the aftermath of the storms. We have already devoted more than \$29.5 million in emergency food and relief commodities, which are now flowing and will continue to flow to affected areas. I will limit my remarks on the U.S. relief effort to this statement since you will have the opportunity to hear more detailed and in-depth descriptions from USAID Acting Assistant Administrator Jose R. Cardenas and Rear Admiral Joseph Kernan, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and Commander, U.S. Fourth Fleet.

While we continue to address the immediate needs of Haiti's people, the Administration is looking ahead simultaneously to determine the needs for the long-term reconstruction and rehabilitation in Haiti. We know that food security, already a concern before the storms, has become even more critical due to the extensive damage to Haiti's agricultural sector. Beyond that, Haiti's roads, bridges, airports, schools, and power grid have all been severely affected.

The starting point for development of a comprehensive plan to help Haiti is an accurate and comprehensive assessment of the damages and what will be needed to reverse them. This process is already underway, and involves the joint efforts of the U.S. and Haitian governments, the international donor community, the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti and other international relief agencies. Once we determine needs, we will consult with Haiti's government, as well as other major donors, international relief agencies, and multilateral institutions to ensure the quickest and most effective recovery effort.

Let me add that coordination among donors and partners in Haiti is ongoing with frequent contacts between ambassadors, representatives of international financial institutions and relief agencies, and the government in Haiti. Other consultative mechanisms also facilitate coordination of support for Haiti, such as the Haiti Key Players meeting, which will be chaired by Under Secretary for Political Affairs, William Burns, in New York on the margins of the UN General Assembly. President Preval will attend.

I would like to touch briefly on the current political situation in Haiti. After four months of political turmoil, the Haitian Parliament approved the government of Prime Minister Michelle Pierre-Louis on September 4, as the country felt the impact of Hurricane Gustav. PM Pierre-Louis and her government did not have a honeymoon period. They began work amidst a crisis that continues today. The support of Haiti's friends and partners will be invaluable to PM Michelle Pierre-Louis's government as it seeks to address the crisis caused by the storms and the very real needs that Haiti had prior to hurricane season. Economic development, good governance, democratic development, security, and humanitarian needs still must be addressed. Our Ambassador in Port au Prince as well as senior U.S. visitors, such as USAID Administrator and Director of Foreign Assistance Henrietta Fore, have al-

ready reached out to the Prime Minister to assure her of our support and commitment to Haiti.

I think I will stop here to allow Mr. Cardenas and Admiral Kernan to brief you. I look forward to answering your questions afterwards. Thank you.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you very much.
Mr. Cárdenas?

STATEMENT OF MR. JOSÉ R. CÁRDENAS, ACTING ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN BUREAU, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to report on USAID's response to the recent hurricanes in Haiti.

I am joined by my colleague, Mr. Ky Luu, director of USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, otherwise known as "OFDA," who can address technical questions about our current disaster-relief effort.

As has been noted, and quite eloquently, by the previous panel, Haiti is experiencing one of the worst natural disasters in its recent history, with great damage caused to Haiti's housing, agriculture, public infrastructure, and education systems. The U.S. Government response to the emergency in Haiti has been both swift and decisive, but, clearly, there is more to be done, both now and in the immediate future.

To date, the U.S. Government has mobilized over \$30 million for food, shelter, water, and relief activities in response to the current disaster. Directing our emergency effort on the ground is a 10-member, USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team, known as a "DART." To support the DART, USAID has activated, as well, a Response Management Team here at our headquarters in Washington. OFDA has also deployed a three-person team to supplement the U.N. Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team currently based in Gonaives.

As of September 20, we have transported 1,217 metric tons of emergency food and relief commodities and over 99,000 liters of drinking water to meet the immediate needs of Haitians, and this, of course, in collaboration with our partners.

In addition, USAID's Office of Food for Peace is providing an additional \$14 million in emergency food relief. This funding comes on top of a \$45 million emergency program announced earlier this year in response to rising prices.

Additional USAID contributions include the following: \$2 million for the short- and medium-term repair of bridges and roads to facilitate the movement and distribution of emergency relief supplies; \$500,000 in funding to the American Red Cross for logistical support and emergency relief supplies; \$1.5 million to the International Organization for Migration for shelter and settlement projects, distribution of nonfood assistance, as well as humanitarian-coordination activities; \$500,000 to the Pan-American Health Organization for health activities benefiting 10,000 people; and \$2 million to the United Nations World Food program to augment logistical capacity for the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Our mission in Haiti also reprogrammed \$5 million to support immediate cleanup, rehabilitate damaged infrastructure, and undertake some flood-prevention activities. To the extent feasible, these activities are labor-intensive methods—Food for Work, Cash for Work—providing short-term jobs and needed income to affected families to help them reestablish their livelihoods.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control have deployed medical personnel to assist in setting up systems to monitor for outbreaks of infectious diseases.

Mr. Chairman, USAID is currently in the emergency relief phase of our response. Looking ahead, we see significant needs in the flood-affected zones of Haiti and the reconstruction and recovery phase, in particular, in five critical areas: (1) repairing public infrastructure, (2) helping to restore public services, (3) supporting small businesses, producers, farms, and families in order to try to revitalize economic activity; (4) watershed stabilization and repair; and (5) improving disaster-mitigation capacity.

Before concluding my statement, Mr. Chairman, I also wanted to echo some of the statements made on the previous panel and recognize the tremendous, literally, life-saving work of the men and women of the *USS Kearsarge* during the past 2 weeks.

The deployment of the *Kearsarge* to Haiti to assist in disaster relief was, frankly, a game changer, and we owe them our deep gratitude. I also wanted to recognize the tremendous contribution of the United Nations stabilization mission in Haiti, MINUSTAH, who have mobilized their manpower and equipment in support of the relief effort.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the U.S. Government is using its wide-ranging assistance resources to help Haiti recover from these disasters. We remain fully committed to helping one of our closest neighbors and our oldest friends during this difficult time.

I welcome any questions that you and other members of the subcommittee may have. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Cárdenas follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. JOSÉ R. CÁRDENAS, ACTING ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN BUREAU, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to appear before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the House Foreign Affairs Committee to report on USAID's response to the hurricanes in Haiti. USAID's response has been immediate and crucial, but the needs in Haiti will be severe for the foreseeable future.

I am joined by my colleague Ky Luu from the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, who can address technical questions about our disaster relief efforts. I am also pleased to be joined in this panel by my colleagues from the United States Southern Command and the Department of State.

I also appreciate hearing from Rep. Meek and the other Members who recently visited Haiti. The leadership provided by Members of Congress on Haiti has been essential to strengthening our country's commitment to Haiti.

BACKGROUND

For over fifty years, Haitians have suffered from a series of violent social and political upheavals. The government changes were capricious, almost never the result of transparent or predictable election cycles, and were frequently accompanied by repression of dissenting voices. These political and security crises have been hugely detrimental to Haiti's economic and social development. Haiti remains the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and some social, economic and environmental

indicators are among the weakest in the world. Nearly 80% of the population lives on less than \$2 per day. Unemployment and underemployment remain major problems. One out of every eight children dies before reaching the age of five.

The widespread poverty seriously impairs the ability of Haiti's citizens to purchase sufficient food, and an estimated 2.5 million Haitians experience chronic food insecurity. A dramatic rise in food prices earlier this year led to food riots in April. These riots resulted in the ousting of Prime Minister Alexis, and a tumultuous period of several months without an effective government.

As you all know, Haiti is experiencing one of the worst natural disasters in its recent history. Within the space of three weeks, between August 15 and September 7, Haiti was hit by four major storms. Between August 15 and 16, Tropical Storm Fay moved across the Island of Hispaniola, through the Dominican Republic and Haiti, resulting in three continuous days of heavy rainfall and flooding. On August 26, Tropical Storm Gustav passed over Haiti and additional rainfall and winds affected eight of Haiti's ten Departments, bringing widespread flooding before moving on to hit Jamaica on August 28. Beginning on September 1, Tropical Storm Hanna brought still more rainfall and winds throughout the country. Finally, on September 7, heavy rains from Hurricane Ike had a significant impact on Haiti, compounding and extending the flooding into previously unaffected areas.

DAMAGE

The passage of four tropical weather systems within less than a month caused widespread suffering among the Haitian people, affecting housing, agriculture, public infrastructure, and education.

To date, the Government of Haiti has reported 423 confirmed deaths, with approximately 850,000 people having lost homes or livelihoods. Over 100,000 people are currently staying in temporary shelters across the country. Because of high water levels and many feet of mud, thousands are forced to live on rooftops, waiting for flood waters to recede. The damage is country-wide, affecting all major population centers outside the capital, as well as rural areas. Some of the most dramatic damage occurred in the city of Gonaïves, where floodwaters covered much of the city and surrounding countryside.

Before the storms impacted the island, Haiti was already suffering from the global food crisis. Violent protests were staged in provincial towns and Port-au-Prince in April 2008 by Haitians unable to meet the rising cost of food. After Hurricane Ike, preliminary assessments confirmed that Haiti's agricultural sector suffered severe damage in the wake of the storms and the entire harvest of the current agricultural season was either lost or severely damaged. Standing maize, sorghum, bean, cassava and banana plantations have been destroyed in at least 75 communes in the ten regions of the country. While multiple relief organizations are responding rapidly to deliver water, food, and supplies to the victims, the humanitarian situation remains precarious, especially given inadequate access to affected areas. Important emergency food stocks designed to meet Haiti's needs for the next few months have been rapidly depleting due to increased need for emergency distribution as a result of the storms.

Flooding and landslides destroyed key bridges and roads, cutting off many land routes and hampering humanitarian assistance efforts. The cutoff of vital arteries around the country has led Haitian President Préval to call his country today "ungovernable." The destruction of Haiti's infrastructure has not yet been fully assessed.

U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

USAID Administrator Henrietta H. Fore recently visited Haiti, where she saw first-hand the extensive devastation caused by the storms. She also met with Haitian President Préval and discussed the urgent need for a coherent and coordinated response from the international donor community. USG disaster response teams on the ground work closely with Government of Haiti counterparts in all aspects of planning and execution of the disaster response. We also maintain close coordination with other international donors and aid organizations. In addition to regular working meetings in Haiti, we pursue other coordination opportunities, such as the Haiti Key Players meeting, which will take place in New York on September 24, to be chaired by Under Secretary for Political Affairs William Burns.

Our response to the current crisis has been swift and decisive. On September 2, U.S. Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson issued a disaster declaration in response to Hurricane Gustav and resulting flooding throughout Haiti. To date, the USG has mobilized \$29.6 million for food, shelter, water, and relief activities in response to the current disaster.

- USAID/Haiti reprogrammed \$5 million in funds from development to humanitarian relief, to support immediate clean-up, rehabilitate damaged infrastructure, and undertake some flood prevention activities. To the extent feasible, these activities use labor-intensive methods, providing short-term jobs and needed income to affected families to help them re-establish their livelihoods.
- USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) is working to program a total of \$9.8 million for provision of non-food relief supplies, and programs addressing basic infrastructure needs, health, and water, sanitation, and hygiene. Facilitation of these interventions are being managed by a ten-member USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART). To support the USAID/DART, USAID/OFDA has activated a Response Management Team (RMT) in Washington.
- On September 4, a USAID/OFDA-chartered aircraft arrived in Port au Prince, delivering USAID/OFDA emergency relief supplies including hygiene kits, ten-liter water containers, and rolls of plastic sheeting. Worth nearly \$335,000 including transport, the supplies were transported to affected areas with assistance from the U.S. Coast Guard and implementing partner International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- On September 11, a second USAID/OFDA-chartered aircraft arrived with additional ten-liter water containers, hygiene kits, and rolls of plastic sheeting, and 2 water bladders, valued at more than \$410,000, including transport.
- USAID/OFDA also authorized the deployment of a three-person Americas Support Team to Haiti to supplement the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination team based in Gonaïves.
- Additional USAID/OFDA contribution includes the following:
 - \$2 million for the short and medium term repair of bridges and roads to facilitate the movement and distribution of emergency relief supplies.
 - \$500,000 in funding to the American Red Cross logistical support and emergency relief supplies.
 - \$1.5 million to IOM for shelter and settlement projects, distribution of non-food assistance, as well as humanitarian coordination activities.
 - \$500,000 to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in response to PAHO's appeal to support the Government of Haiti and relief organizations with health activities, benefiting 10,000 people.
 - \$2 million to the United Nations World Food Program to augment logistical capacity for delivery of humanitarian aid.
 - \$750,000 to World Vision to support the distribution of non-food relief supplies and water, sanitation, and hygiene activities, benefiting nearly 70,000 people.
- In addition, USAID's Office of Food for Peace is providing \$14 million of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food aid to be provided through the United Nations World Food Program, World Vision, and Catholic Relief Services to respond to relief and recovery food aid needs in Haiti. These organizations were already covering approximately 90% of the Haitian territory with feeding programs, reaching 1.5 million of Haiti's poorest and most vulnerable citizens. The programs' coverage has been expanded to provide emergency feeding in additional areas impacted by the storms.
- The US Department of Defense has contributed \$1,021,660 as of September 22 to cover costs of emergency relief activities.
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has deployed medical personnel to assist in setting up systems monitor for outbreaks of infectious diseases

As of September 16, we have transported 6782 metric tons of emergency food and relief commodities and over 99,000 liters of safe drinking water to meet the immediate needs of Haitians, in collaboration with our partners.¹

On September 5, U.S. Navy's 4th Fleet diverted the amphibious ship USS Kearsarge from Colombia to assist the Haitian people. On September 8, the USS Kearsarge arrived in Haiti, bringing urgently needed air and sealift capacity to transport relief aid to the flooded areas inaccessible by road. USS Kearsarge support to Haiti includes the movement of food, cargo and equipment between Port-au-Prince and Gonaïves, Jeremie, Saint Marc, Port de Paix, Jacmel and Les Cayes. USAID/Haiti and USAID/OFDA are working closely with IOM, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the donors' water, sanitation, and hygiene cluster to identify logistics and transport options in order to provide water generated by the USS

¹This amount should read 872, not 6782 (corrected after hearing).

Kearsarge for populations without access to safe drinking water. The USS Kearsarge mission in Haiti, originally slated to last until September 13, has been extended.

In addition to providing logistics support for delivery of humanitarian assistance, engineers from the USS Kearsarge have joined with USAID/Haiti engineers to assess road conditions and damage to bridges, in order to discuss priority infrastructure interventions with the Government of Haiti. U.S. Department of Defense engineers are working closely with the Government of Haiti Ministry of Public Works, Transport, and Communication to provide technical advice and conduct research in order to clarify the Ministry's identified infrastructure needs.

MINUSTAH are providing security and logistics support to ongoing humanitarian efforts.

The Center for International Disaster Information, is actively reaching out to the Haitian Diaspora and other organizations or individuals to assist in channeling humanitarian donations to those most affected by this disaster.

We are joining with the Haitian Diaspora to participate in Haiti's recovery and creation of livelihoods, by committing an initial \$2 million to leverage Diaspora investments in small and medium business enterprises in Haiti. USAID's contribution will serve as a catalyst to mobilize other donor and private sector contributions to this initiative.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

USAID is currently in the emergency relief phase of our response. Looking ahead, we see significant needs in the flood affected zones of Haiti in the reconstruction and recovery phase in five critical areas:

Repair Public Infrastructure. There is a strong need to stimulate economic activity and help resume public services, preferably utilizing manual labor to allow Haitian families to receive immediate infusions of cash to temporarily offset lost livelihoods. This includes rebuilding schools and clinics; road and small bridge repair; and water and sanitation systems restoration.

Help Restore Public Services. In addition to repairing physical damage to schools, health clinics, and other public buildings, the restoration of public services will require replacing damaged or ruined equipment and medical and school supplies.

Support Small Business, Producers, Farms and Families. Self-help and income generation programs could provide a means to help small businesses recover. This includes micro-loans; seeds, tools, and livestock distribution; and support for families.

Watershed Stabilization and Repair. Assistance is required to support the restoration of agricultural production through irrigation repair and flood control; stabilize weak hillsides to prevent further damage to agricultural and transportation systems; and strengthen water user associations.

Improve Disaster Mitigation Capacity. National and local governments and community groups need support in reducing disaster vulnerability through better planning, risk assessment, and preparedness measures.

CONCLUSIONS

The U.S. is using its wide-ranging assistance resources to help Haiti recover from this disaster. We remain firmly committed to helping one of our closest neighbors during this difficult time.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I welcome any questions that you and other Members of the Subcommittee may have. Thank you.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Cárdenas.

Admiral Kernan? Let me just say that, Admiral, I want to thank, as was just mentioned, the service personnel on the *USS Kearsarge*. We truly appreciate everything that they are doing. Admiral?

STATEMENT OF REAR ADMIRAL JOSEPH D. KERNAN, COMMANDER, U.S. NAVAL FORCES SOUTHERN COMMAND, U.S. 4TH FLEET

Admiral KERNAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Engel, distinguished members of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, thank you for the opportunity to discuss Southern Com-

mand's and the Fourth Fleet's role in the ongoing hurricane relief efforts in Haiti.

I spent 10 days in Haiti, both on the ground and on the *USS Kearsarge*, certainly overseeing military contributions to the relief efforts, but also to facilitate and participate in the coordination of all U.S. Government, United Nations, and nongovernmental organization relief efforts. I will overview our activities and endeavor to provide you a useful perspective, both of the situation and the ongoing collective relief efforts.

As you might expect, DoD's role, which was directed to us, was, in fact, to conduct humanitarian assistance, disaster response, and disaster relief in order to mitigate human suffering and loss of life in Haiti. Our method to do that was to deploy forces to best support USAID, OFDA, and Ambassador Sanderson's humanitarian-assistance requirements, those, of course, coordinated through and discussed with the Government of Haiti.

Humanitarian assistance and disaster response are Fourth Fleet missions, along with partnership building and security cooperation, all of which are, typically, mutually enabling. The *Kearsarge* was actually conducting a 4-month, humanitarian-assistance mission in multiple countries in the region before we diverted her to Haiti.

As do many of our ships, particularly during hurricane season, she deployed prepared to support disaster-relief missions. We realize the advantages, the responsiveness and the capabilities that we bring from the *USS Kearsarge* to serve the immediate needs of a disaster of this nature.

Very importantly, success in a mission of this nature is dependent upon the cooperative efforts of the U.S. interagency nongovernmental organizations, the U.N., and, very critically, the affected nation. In this regard, we relentlessly advocated and facilitated the establishment of what we would call "clusters." These are functional groups composed of common providers so that the efforts could be coordinated and best meet the Haitian Government's needs. Medical, engineering and logistics are examples of these clusters. Agencies that had any contribution in any of these areas would meet to coordinate collective efforts so that they could, in fact, be most effective and most efficient.

Sir, I have provided you a few slides. I am not sure if they are going to put them up on the screen or not, but I would like to quickly walk through those slides. They are essentially illustrative in nature and somewhat consistent with Congresswoman Edwards. I will comment briefly on each of them and try to give you a view of the damage, highlight some response efforts, and, again, provide what it looks like.

The first slide up on the screen, obviously, is illustrative of what we saw on the ground. Up in the upper-left-hand corner, it is important to realize that we, as a military, did not come to this area armed. We relied on that security protection from MINUSTAH, which, in my mind, worked very, very well. They were very responsive and very supportive to all of the places that we went.

The center section, again, is on the ground in Gonaives. It is a critical situation. That is pretty much what the whole town looked like.

On the left-hand-side, obviously, orphanages. We went to a number of orphanages and provided food and assistance to them. Tragically, in this case, in this orphanage, eight of the parents either were lost or were recently lost in the floodings, so, additionally, obviously, a critical concern there in this orphanage run by the sisters of a charity, where probably 50 percent of the children were infected with HIV.

The bottom picture is very important. This is actually the relief effort in Gonaives when they were in line collecting supplies that we provided to the area. It is actually a very orderly execution of the mission of actually delivering those supplies to the people. Only women were allowed to collect those supplies that we stood on the ground. There was no rioting. They knew that they were going to get the humanitarian relief that we provided of an emergency nature so it went extraordinarily well. Slide, please.

This, again—Congresswoman Edwards showed this—this is the devastation to, obviously, the infrastructure, the housing, the agriculture, the public services, all of the implications of this slide, watershed sanitation, I think, are fairly clear. Next slide, please.

One of the things we did, in addition to providing the mobility provided by the six helicopters and the three landing craft, we, in fact, did a number of assessments around the region to determine what the infrastructure damage was. Those, in fact, were joint teams that we provided most of the mobility and movement for.

The United Nations, USAID, MINUSTAH, the Haiti public works all participated in the assessments, and this gives you an idea of what the six critical, infrastructure bridges were that were priorities for the Haitian Government identified as most important to them. These, in fact, are illustrative of what the infrastructure situation looks like on the ground. Next slide, please.

Again, the other three bridges and the locations of those bridges. Slide, please.

There are 12 more dots on this picture than there were when this was produced. It demonstrates where we have been in the country by helicopters: 1,500 metric tons of goods delivered. That includes water. We did actually over 90 air sorties and 27 deliveries from waterborne craft.

So, on order, the *Kearsarge*, as soon as we believe that the civil authorities can effectively respond to the situation, without military assistance, will depart, and we will remain and finish our humanitarian mission around the area.

This essentially concludes my opening remarks, and I am happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Kernan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REAR ADMIRAL JOSEPH D. KERNAN, COMMANDER, U.S.
NAVAL FORCES SOUTHERN COMMAND, U.S. 4TH FLEET

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the ongoing relief efforts of the U.S. Military in Haiti. I would also like to thank the Committee for taking the time to examine this important situation in our hemisphere.

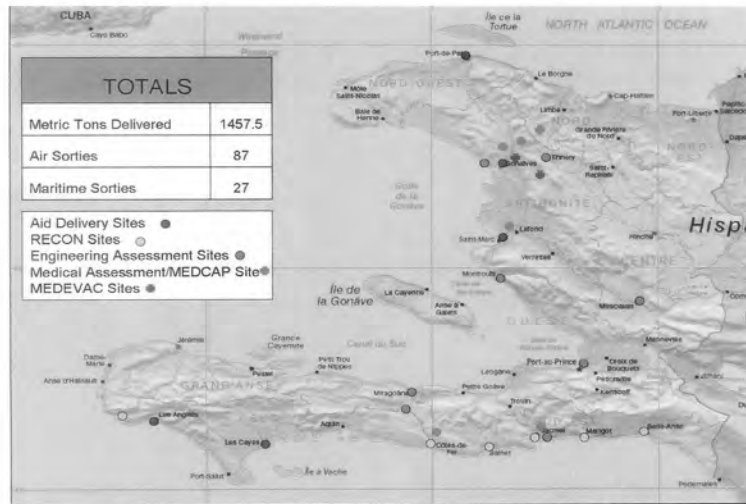
As a result of a Government of Haiti request for assistance through the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti, the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) and the Fourth Fleet deployed the USS KEARSARGE to Haiti on September 7th to support the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in their relief efforts. Prior to the response in Haiti, the

USS KEARSARGE was conducting a humanitarian mission in Colombia as part of a humanitarian assistance deployment in Central and South America and the Caribbean region called "Continuing Promise 2008." The timing of and preparation for this mission was purposeful. The USS KEARSARGE was not only prepared for its planned humanitarian assistance visits, but also to respond to disasters of this nature during the hurricane season. Our primary mission in Haiti is to support overall USG efforts to conduct disaster relief in order to mitigate human suffering and loss of life. Our forces have delivered over 1000 metric tons of relief supplies, principally food, and almost 10,000 2.5 gallon water bags to devastated areas in Haiti, and that number continues to grow every day. KEARSARGE support to Haiti includes the air and waterborne movement of cargo and equipment between Port-au-Prince and Gonaives, Jeremie, Saint Marc, Port de Paix, Jacmel, and Les Cayes. The KEARSARGE has also been able to employ its medical capabilities to conduct assessments, provide care, and recommend protocols to mitigate current and future disaster-induced medical issues. The USS KEARSARGE engineering team, augmented by SOUTHCOM engineers, is working with USAID, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and the Government of Haiti to conduct assessments of basic infrastructure damage and needs, with a focus on bridges and roads.

All of the efforts described above would not have been possible without coordinated and combined efforts with our interagency partners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), MINUSTAH, other UN organizations, and the Haitian government. I have personally been in Haiti to oversee U.S. Military contributions to these operations and I can testify to the success of these collective efforts and the great work being done by our young Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, DOD Civilians, and Coastguardsmen. I thank you for your interest and support and am prepared to answer your questions.



USS KEARSARGE crew and assets in action as it distributes supplies and delivers medical assistance. Cooperation with host nation, NGOs, and other partners has been the key to reaching those who need medical attention and basic supplies of food and water.



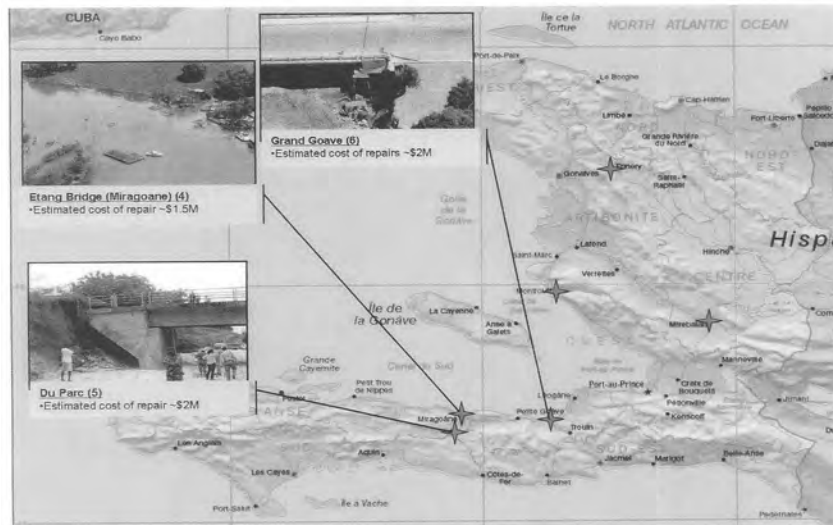
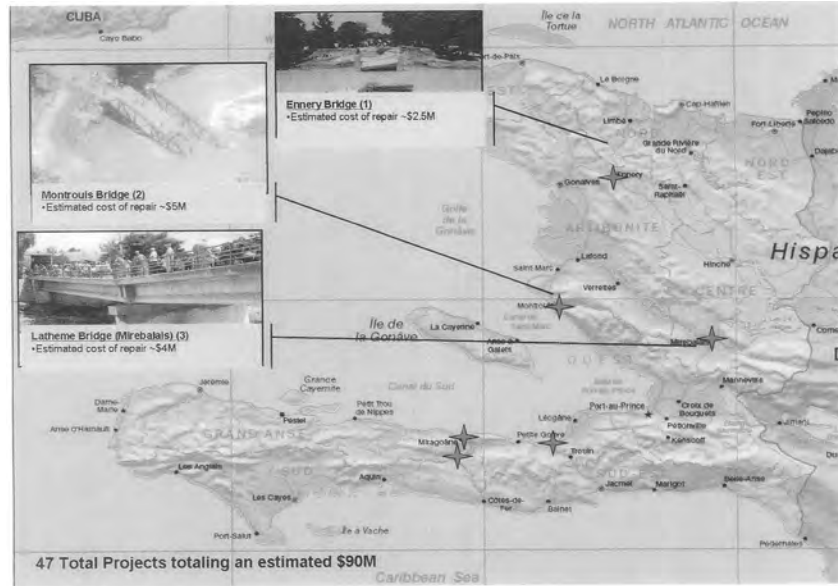
The Department of Defense brought its unique sea-based mobility assets to provide logistical support such as delivering food, water, and medical supplies in required quantities to remote and difficult to access locations. To date, we have met or exceeded requested quantities.



These photos depict the conditions in Haiti, particularly in Gonaïves, one of the most affected areas. The U.S. Military has worked hand-in-hand with the MINUSTAH forces on the ground, interagency partners, NGOs, partner nations, and the Government of Haiti. Because of this collective commitment by participating organizations to coordinate their efforts and the volume of supplies rapidly made available, aid has been widely distributed in a methodical and orderly manner.



The widespread flooding is not only affecting the cities, it has also devastated crops, which creates long-term health concerns and potential food shortages. A significant number of crops will be lost and standing water is creating a breeding ground for mosquitoes, increasing risk of dengue fever, malaria, and other diseases. Additionally, significant damage has occurred to water sources and systems throughout Haiti.



A joint effort to identify critical infrastructure throughout the country resulted in the prioritization of six key bridges that need immediate repair in order to facilitate further relief efforts and re-establish lines of communication. These maps show the top six priorities. This joint effort also identified a number of other infrastructure problems in Public Works related areas.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Admiral, and thank you for your good work.

As you can probably hear, we are in the midst of some votes on the floor. I am going to let Congressman Meeks give a brief statement, and then we will recess until 10 minutes after the end of the vote, at which time we will ask our panelists some questions. Mr. Meeks?

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank all of you for your testimony today, as the earlier panel.

"If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich." That was a statement or quote by John F. Kennedy, and while President Kennedy's words were in reference to the U.S. treatment of its own citizens, I believe that the same is true for U.S. treatment of its poorest neighbors.

If we allow disaster and chaos to prevail in our own back yard, we are simply waiting for it to fester until it reaches our front door. Haiti is in crises right now after the effects of recent hurricanes. More than ever, it needs U.S. resources. According to the Haitian Government, at least \$400 million in funds are needed to help Haiti recover from the devastation caused by Hurricane Gustav and further complicated by flooding from Hurricane Ike.

The U.S. pledge of approximately \$30 million is simply inadequate. Last week, this committee passed a bill to provide \$1 billion of assistance to Georgia in its time of needs, \$1 billion for nearly 5 million people in Georgia, a United States ally who deserves help. But with approximately 9 million people, 9 million citizens, of Haiti, they deserve parity in our assistance, too.

With every day that we wait, we risk more lives. Hundreds have already perished in subhuman conditions. The international community is watching. All of us are watching. We have to do more.

I thank the lady and gentleman that are here and my colleagues that testified before. We just have to come together. There is just no way, in the year 2008, we can allow individuals to be, and to continue to be, living in the conditions that they are living in in Haiti. You know, it is just incredible to me. We have to give more. We have to do more. I will be back to ask questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ENGEL. Okay. We will let that be the last word until we finish the votes, at which time we will reconvene 10 minutes afterwards. So the subcommittee is in recess.

[Whereupon, a short recess was taken.]

Mr. ENGEL. Okay. The hearing will reconvene. I thank our witnesses for their patience, and let me start with the questions. Let me start with Ms. Madison.

You have heard some of our colleagues speak before in the first panel, and a number of them mentioned TPS, Temporary Protective Status. As you know, of course, it is designed to help aliens in the United States who are temporarily unable to safely return to their home country because of ongoing armed conflict or an environmental disaster or other extraordinary conditions.

I would think that Haiti certainly would qualify for that. If any situation meets the circumstances, the situation in Haiti certainly does, yet we have not extended TPS to Haitians in the United States.

So the question is, why have we not, and are we currently reviewing the possibility of designating Haiti for TPS?

Ms. MADISON. The first thing I would like to say, since the issue came up earlier, was that, in fact, according to the Department of Homeland Security, while domestic enforcement on Haitian immigrants here now has not stopped, they have temporarily suspended the deportations while they analyze the situation. They would expect those deportations to continue down the road. They have done a change in the status on their maritime enforcement. I just wanted to relay that, since the issue came up earlier.

In terms of the Temporary Protective Status, of course, the authority on this issue lies with the Secretary of Homeland Security, who, in consultation with other government agencies in the inter-agency, can, in fact, make the decision on TPS. And, according to the Department of Homeland Security, the issue is still under review, and while, of course, the situation in Haiti is dire and will have to be taken into consideration in this process, there are some concerns about the consequences of granting TPS, which will have to be discussed in this process, including the possibility that, in fact, it will encourage people to depart. Obviously, we do not want to create a humanitarian disaster on the high seas by shifting our stance.

So, from our perspective, from the perspective of the Department of State, I, of course, have heard the message loud and clear from the members of the committee and from your first panel, and we will take the message back that the Congress is intensely interested in the question of what our intentions are in this area.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. Admiral Kernan, it is my understanding, and you mentioned it, and others have said it, that scores of bridges were destroyed throughout Haiti in recent storms, and many have damage, if they were not totally destroyed. The U.S. military, obviously, has great expertise in emergency road and bridge construction and repair, from the Navy Seabees to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, some of the best construction specialists today serving in or with our armed forces.

There had been some question about, if we are doing temporary bridges, can those bridges be sustainable over the long run? What can the U.S. military do, on an emergency basis or on a more permanent level, to repair important washed-out bridges and roads in Haiti?

Admiral KERNAN. Mr. Chairman, there is resident capability within the military. The decision of where they want to employ those capabilities, obviously, is a decision of at a higher level than me. Those capabilities probably reside in the Seabees; probably reside in the Corps of Engineers.

Our mission, in time while we were in Haiti, was, again, to conduct the assessments in a collective effort to try and determine what, in fact, needed to be done with the organic engineers that were aboard *Kearsarge*. We only had a limited capability on *Kearsarge* in the humanitarian mission. We were planning to do a number of small projects, school projects, during that humanitarian mission that we were conducting in the region.

So the decisions on what capability would be applied from DoD would, of course, be decided by somebody else, whether they were available and the priorities and things of that nature.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. Mr. Cárdenas?

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could just add to the admiral's comments on the bridges, this is something that is, indeed, ongoing, in terms of the assessments and the repairs of the bridges, as we speak. USAID is working with the Government of Haiti, the World Bank, and other international donor agencies and countries to get those bridges, at least, temporarily reestablished so that it could aid in the distribution of the humanitarian supplies.

Drawing from the admiral's earlier testimony, at the bridge at Ennery, which is up near the Gonaives area up here, MINUSTAH has a Bailey bridge, which they have asked our help in laying down.

The other key bridges, from the admiral's testimony, here in the middle, in the Artibonite area, some traffic has been able to be re-established on these two bridges.

Down in the southern claw, in this area here, where there are three smaller bridges, what has happened is, as the members were saying this morning, that with the collapse of these choke points, the country has been basically dismembered, and that has hurt the initial emergency-distribution phase, but, right now, we have, in working with engineers from the *Kearsarge* and other participants on the ground, we have succeeded so far in establishing some ability for traffic to cross those bridges. They are not permanent solutions, but they have been accomplished in order to help in the redistribution of the assistance.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Cárdenas. Let me ask you a couple of other questions. One is about long-term hunger. It is always a threat in Haiti, especially with children and with very poor people. Crop failures, droughts, and other causes of food shortages make it worse.

Earlier this year, we had an increase in commodity prices of imported food, and that caused a crisis in Haiti, and there were food riots—we all remember that—and the U.S. responded that time with \$45 million in emergency food aid.

Given the hurricanes, let me ask you this: Has Haiti now entered a new food crisis, only worse, and how much of the nation's agricultural crops have been lost due to the recent hurricanes and storms, and what is USAID doing to ensure that nutritious meals are stored, transported, prepared, and are readily available in Haiti to meet the needs of the people there?

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Yes, sir. The Food for Peace program. As you noted, recently, we have about a \$35 million annual program, Food for Peace program, in Haiti. That was augmented by \$45 million earlier this year, as you noted, due to the spike in food prices. On top of that, Food for Peace has also met some of the World Food program appeal.

Right now, today, as we speak, there is sufficient food, as far as what we will be able to get to maybe 1.5 million, perhaps to rise to 2 million, people that we can get food to on the ground. The decisive point is going to be about 3 or 4 or 5 months from now because the stocks are moving in the service of the emergency phase, but

we are going to have to back fill those commodities so that we do not have a break.

I mentioned the Artibonite Valley, where there is most of the agricultural production. We have heard that roughly 60 percent of the crops have been washed away. It is going to take quite a long time to get back into production. We are going to do that.

As we look downrange a little bit, we are looking at about 4, 5, 6 months down the road, where we have got to make sure that we have the commodities moving in a sequenced way so that we do not wind up, again, obligating all of the commodities at this point so that, when December rolls around, January, those stocks are depleted.

Mr. ENGEL. Talk to me, please, Mr. Cárdenas, about disease outbreaks, the possibility of a major disease outbreak. There is standing water, as we saw in the slides. There is a lack of sanitation. Have we begun seeing disease expand in Haiti since the storms? What do we see down the line?

Mr. CÁRDENAS. We have a couple of partners on the ground: Centers for Disease Control and some of our international partners. On the broader issue of how to plan for to respond to disease, I would like to turn the microphone over to Mr. Luu.

Mr. LUU. Mr. Chairman?

Mr. ENGEL. Yes. Could you please identify yourself?

Mr. LUU. Yes. I am Ky Luu. I am the director of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, OFDA.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you.

Mr. LUU. We do have some very strong partners on the ground right now that we are providing funding to, for example, the Pan-American Health Organization. We are looking at funding, and continuing to fund, World Vision and other NGOs, looking at improving the water-sanitation situation.

With regard to outbreaks, I think that we have been fortunate, to date, that we have not had a large, waterborne outbreak. That is still something that we are monitoring very closely.

Access is an issue. Clearly, we have done a very good job, in terms of being able to establish hubs along the coastal area, but, as the infrastructure improves, and we are able to get more access to some of the in-lying areas and are able to go into some of the shelters, we have seen that there are real issues there, in terms of diarrheal diseases outbreaks and other potential waterborne diseases. Through partners like PAHO, as I noted before, we are looking to fund to move essential medicines to these temporary shelters to be able to move medical personnel, both international and local staff, into these areas.

So that is something that is a concern, and it continues to be a concern.

Mr. ENGEL. Let me ask you this: If we see the start of an outbreak of disease, are we confident that we have the ability to move rapidly to combat that, to overtake it, so it does not become endemic?

Mr. LUU. Again, with the in-country assets, whether they are the medicines or staff, this is very much dependent upon the ability for us to improve kind of the interior local infrastructure to be able to move people around. At this stage, as noted in the panel before me,

there continue to be issues with regard to flood waters receding and other issues, in terms of access due to the mud.

So we are confident that we have the people and the resources in place, but it will be, again, driven by how quickly we are able to improve the local roads and bridges to be able to move people around, to be able to react as quickly as we can.

Mr. ENGEL. Well, let me just say, I think, here, money is also of the essence as well, and that is why I think my colleagues, very importantly, mentioned the fact that we need some emergency assistance and why Congresswoman Waters' letter was so important for us to sign.

Let me ask one final question, and then I will turn it over to my colleagues, and that is more of a long-term question, and either Ms. Madison or Mr. Cárdenas can answer it. It is the whole issue of reforestation. Reforestation, as you know, of the hillsides has been mentioned as one of the steps that we can take to help in preparing for the next crisis. Reforestation would help to reduce the scale of flooding, obviously, in the event of another storm.

Let me ask, what kind of food crops can be used for this reforestation, given the local conditions in Haiti? Are there certain crops that might be more affected than others, and what are we looking at, in terms of a time period for these programs to take effect?

I mentioned before that the Haitian Ambassador was in the room, and he has said many times that the major reason tropical storms have been so devastating in Haiti is the country's massive deforestation. So I would like to also ask if you agree with that assessment, and what assistance efforts have the U.S. undertaken in recent years to help in reforestation efforts, and how effective has it been? All of those questions, and should there be an emergency program, beginning right now, to reforest the hillsides to prevent another disaster?

Let me throw in one last thing because we have discussed this in previous hearings. What about the potential use of *jatropha*, which is a plant that can produce oil for bio-diesel as well, to combat deforestation in Haiti? Any of those things. Perhaps we will start with you, Mr. Cárdenas.

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Yes, Mr. Chairman. In all candor, the issue of forestation in Haiti has been one that has vexed our agency for many, many years. We have tried various programs. Unfortunately, planting trees; we could not keep up the pace by which they were being cut down.

We tried sort of a twist on that by planting trees, as you alluded to, planting trees that have value, in and of themselves, that they produce products to create a disincentive for their removal.

The basic issue it always came down to was that people were so desperate economically that the removal of the trees for charcoal and whatnot just proved to be such a huge obstacle to overcome that our mission in Port-au-Prince decided that since the undercurrent to the problem of the deforestation was lack of economic opportunity for the Haitians that engage in this activity, the idea was to get them off the hillsides and get them into economically productive activity that we could help facilitate.

So that is kind of the new approach that the mission in Port-au-Prince is taking, is trying to target economic-growth programs in

those areas, again, to pull people off the hillside and get them into other types of economic sustenance.

It does not mean that we are not attentive to the environmental threats that those hillsides present. We continue to engage in a lot of environmental work—soil stabilization, flood control, irrigation—trying to mitigate the threats that when another tropical storm or another big storm comes, that, again, the hillside gets washed away and the flooding, to the extent that we saw on the slides earlier.

We are engaging in a lot of that sort of watershed stabilization and irrigation flooding, but that continues to be a particular, particular challenge for us in Haiti today.

Mr. ENGEL. I just want to say that we are still looking into this jatropha plant, but it is my, and correct me if I am wrong, it is my belief that jatropha has little or no value for charcoal production when it is chopped down, and that is why we think it is an excellent crop to plant and also could have, as you pointed out, economic benefit to Haiti as well.

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Yes, sir. Haiti was designated as one of the countries, in a partnership we signed with Brazil, to try and use our collective knowledge on bio-fuels, bio-diesel products. So we will be investigating precisely that, the possibilities of using jatropha for bio-diesel, but that program is just really getting started.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. Ms. Madison, did you have anything to add?

Ms. MADISON. No, Mr. Chairman.
[Additional information follows:]

WRITTEN RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM MS. KIRSTEN D. MADISON TO QUESTION ASKED DURING THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE ELIOT L. ENGEL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

USAID believes that Jatropha production can be successful when the production and marketing systems, as well as the end use for the oil, are well understood. The Agency also believes that there is much potential, as the Chairman points out; to protect hillsides, mitigate some flood intensity, and most importantly provide livelihood opportunities. We agree that Jatropha has significant potential for Haiti's hillsides and farmers, and are exploring options for production in Haiti. In doing so, however, we have to consider several factors including Jatropha oil's economic viability as well as the secondary products of glycerin and nitrogen rich seed cake. These in fact would provide additional earnings needed to make Haiti's overall market chain profitable.

For such a project to have wide-spread and long-term success, it must be implemented in a rational, profit-making business manner. Haitian farmers and workers tend to make choices that will safeguard their immediate livelihoods since they do not have sufficient resource reserves to cope with lost or delayed harvests and incomes. Commercial business operators are similarly bound in that they too cannot sustain start-up activities without seeing a prompt return on investment due to insufficient capital reserves and access to credit.

We must be mindful of this logical risk aversion as we introduce alternative crops and techniques. If we were to encourage wide-spread planting of Jatropha before having the prerequisite pieces of a viable business model in place, many participating farmers and processors would run an unacceptable risk of loss. Should they encounter failure, they would be highly reluctant to try again, even if the business plan flaws have been resolved.

This being said, we fully support Haitian private sector efforts to establish sustainable and profitable sources, and markets for Jatropha products. Working through the recently awarded MarChE project, the Jatropha value chain is being assessed and assistance will be available to interested businesses. Additionally, the DEED (The Development Economique pour un Environnement Durable) watershed project is located in a prime Jatropha growing region, and will be working with pro-

ducers to plan and actualize *Jatropha* activities such that they will be profitable, sustainable, and environmentally beneficial.

Mr. ENGEL. All right. Thank you.

One last quick question, and then I am going to turn it over to Mr. Delahunt, to the admiral: How long do you expect the *Kearsarge* to stay? What do you see the U.S. military's role, in the weeks and months ahead, and are the U.S. Armed Forces performing logistics operations for all countries and NGOs or just for the U.S. Government?

Admiral KERNAN. We viewed the end state of our mission when there was a capability in the country to provide the logistics support necessary for the critical needs of the Haitian people. That date is around the 25th or 26th, at this point in time, and that was a collective decision between—

Mr. ENGEL. The 25th, 26th of September.

Admiral KERNAN. Of September. That is right. The World Food program and other organizations are actually bringing in helicopters and landing craft that will, in fact, reach and exceed the capacity of what the *USS Kearsarge* has been able to provide over the last couple of weeks. The *Kearsarge*, in fact, and the helicopters and the boats; we collectively worked in that cluster that I mentioned, and we delivered and transported people, organizations, anything where the priorities were needed.

So we actually supported U.N. organizations and nongovernmental organizations in delivering those people to places that were determined collectively and prioritized by the Haitian Government where we needed to go.

So we viewed ourselves as just a logistics platform supporting USAID and OFDA and the Ambassador's contributions.

What we will do after this; again, we will continue on with our 2-month humanitarian-assistance mission. The next work will be in the Dominican Republic. We are also scheduled to go to a number of other places in the region. We have gone to Nicaragua. We have gone to Colombia. So that will all be kind of humanitarian-type assistance.

What we had on the *Kearsarge* was that immediate response capability. We could get there fast. We are organic. We had 1,100 people who did all of the delivery and lifting of the 110-pound bags of rice.

So we viewed ourselves as an emergency response in the region, and now we are moving on to our humanitarian assistance, but we are not leaving until we are comfortable, and the Ambassador is comfortable and the other organizations, that the delivery to the Haitian people is going to be sustained for their immediate needs.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. Mr. Delahunt?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Admiral, well done, and please convey to your crew our pride and admiration for their work. You make a significant contribution to our efforts, in terms of public diplomacy and restoring the image of the United States, so well done.

Admiral KERNAN. Thanks very much, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I guess, Mr. Cárdenas, do you agree with the administrator that—I am quoting here now—that “this will take billions of dollars; this is not something small”?

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Objectively speaking, Congressman, yes.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you. In terms of the issue of hunger, the Haitian Agricultural Minister puts out an estimate of \$180 million and is quoted as having said that the system of agriculture has been destroyed in Haiti. You reviewed for us your concerns about this fall. I think we all share those concerns. I think it was Ms. Madison that talked about the possibility of a revisit of the flotilla of refugees attempting to flee the country. It would appear that that could very well be the precipitating cause, as opposed to an enactment of TPS.

Could you tell us what your recommendation will be to the Department of Homeland Security about TPS? I presume that you have discussed it internally.

Ms. MADISON. Congressman, I am actually not in a position to tell you what the position of the Department of State will be on that issue.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Have you discussed it internally?

Ms. MADISON. There have been some preliminary discussions. Obviously, this is an issue that has come up over and over again, but, again, I am not in a position, at this time, to tell you what the recommendation of the Department, as a whole, would be.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I would presume that there is no position, then, by the Department of State, in terms of its recommendation after consultation.

Ms. MADISON. I am sorry, sir. I did not hear you.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I infer from your response to my question that, as of now, the Department of State has not included concluded their recommendation.

Ms. MADISON. No, sir. As far as I know, we have not.

Mr. DELAHUNT. As far as you know, you have not.

Ms. MADISON. We have not concluded a recommendation, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay. Because, again, I do not think TPS necessarily would be the catalyst for the humanitarian crisis that we witnessed in the 1990s but, rather, this potential—I keep hearing words like “famine” and “massive hunger,” et cetera, et cetera. So you indicated you would bring back the sentiments of this panel.

Presuming that we are talking about, so far, \$30 million, what is the anticipated contribution by USAID in the Department of State, given the administrator’s position that it is going to cost billions? Mr. Cárdenas?

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Yes, Mr. Delahunt. The short answer is, we do not know, at this moment, what we are looking at in an immediate recovery and rehabilitation phase. We are currently, as you know, in the emergency phase.

OFDA has mobilized over \$30 million, to date, but, at the same time, as the emergency assistance is getting to Haitians in need, we are also conducting the assessments. These assessments are being done by the experts, members of the DART Team, in coordination with the mission, with the Government of Haiti, with the international donor community, for example, the World Bank.

Mr. DELAHUNT. What I find perplexing is that the administration came before this committee, and the President, and announced a request for the State of Georgia for \$1 billion, and yet we are still in the assessment stage, the emergency stage, as it comes to Haiti.

I think you were here when I made my opening remarks and expressed my unease about the disparity between what we are capable of doing for a nation of some 4.5 million people far away, and yet, for Haiti, we are still talking \$30 million. This is unacceptable, particularly when it was represented to the full committee that the monies that would be allocated to the first phase of that \$1 billion bailout were monies that were in existence. It was not new monies. These monies were to be reprogrammed.

I would hope that, from the Western Hemisphere Bureau, if you have not had this internal discussion, that there would be a new look at those monies that are being reprogrammed and that Haiti would be treated similarly as Georgia. Would either one of you care to respond?

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Let me just, if I could, before turning it over to Deputy Assistant Secretary Madison, is we are moving with all deliberate speed on getting those assessment reports back from the field in as quick a time as possible.

As far as the broader administration position is concerned, Mr. Delahunt, I have been contacted several times by the NSC asking about the progress we are making in Haiti. They have asked to be kept informed every step of the way, and they have asked us to please prepare recommendations for the recovery and rehabilitation phase.

Last week, there was a high-level meeting at the White House solely on the topic of Caribbean hurricane disaster relief.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I am pleased to hear that these meetings are being conducted, and I do not, for a moment, doubt your good intentions. At the same time, it was a matter of hours when the announcement came vis-à-vis Georgia and the \$1 billion.

Everything that we hear from our colleagues, everything that we hear from representatives of the Government of Haiti, we hear from our own Ambassador, Ambassador Sanderson, that this is a disaster of epic proportions, and yet we are hearing \$30 million. What I find disturbing is that we do not seem to have the capacity to move with the same alacrity regarding Haiti as we do with Georgia.

Mr. CÁRDENAS. I believe that the United States, as you know, Mr. Delahunt, this is a commitment to Haiti that spans administrations.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I understand it spans administrations, but, you know, it still does not answer the crux of why there seems to be the ability to move with dispatch and speed when it comes to a nation in the Caucasus when yet, here in our backyard, we are having internal meetings. I guess we have to ratchet is up because I agree with the administrator that it is billions, and let us get it out on the table, and let us talk about it.

You have heard the members of the congressional panel that testified before you that before these reprogrammed monies go to Georgia, what about Haiti? Haiti always seems to be last in line. We do not want a humanitarian disaster there. I think we can all agree with that. I think the initial response has been solid. I think we, as a government, are to be commended, but we have got to get going here.

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Understood, sir. The administrator, when she made that quote, that was actually in the context of her trip down there last week, and I know that since she has been back, she has been in touch with the secretary of state and National Security Adviser Steve Hadley on her impressions of the trip, and basically, again, pressing the opinion that we need to be there for Haiti in the coming weeks and months. I think we are safe to say that the United States will be there for Haiti, as they rebuild and recover from these natural disasters.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Do you care to respond, Ms. Madison?

Ms. MADISON. Georgia takes me well out of my area of responsibility, although I will say that I think that the United States made a commitment there to address humanitarian needs and facilitate economic reconstruction and that we believe it was important to a country facing a threat to its sovereignty and its territorial integrity.

I do think, just to echo what José Cárdenas has said, that the commitment of the United States to Haiti really has been abundantly clear. It is one of the largest assistance programs, on an ongoing basis—

Mr. DELAHUNT. I understand that, Madam Secretary. At the same time, you know, talk is cheap. It is a question of “Where is the beef?” We can talk and talk and talk, but if we are not walking the walk—we did not walk the walk when it came to Georgia; we ran, and we do not have a long-term relationship, in terms of an historic relationship, with Georgia as we do with Haiti. You have heard other members here comment upon our history with Haiti.

I find it unconscionable that we can respond so quickly, in a matter of hours, that the Vice President goes and makes the announcement there, and we are talking nickels and dimes when it comes to having to deal with the order of magnitude of the disaster that has befallen this poor and tragic country.

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Just to try to finish the point, sir, I make the point about our commitment because I think that it is important to understand that we are not walking away from Haiti. We expect to be right there with Haiti in the reconstruction process.

This week, we are also in New York meeting with the other international donors. Given the extent of the damage that we see here, it is going to take not only the U.S. but other international donors to respond to this, and I think that, you know, one of the things that is going to have to happen is an internal discussion in the executive branch with OMB and the other folks who actually understand and control the budgets to look at what our resources are and line them up against the assessments and the needs that are being identified by the Government of Haiti, through our mission on the ground, through AID and their assessment teams, so that we do—

Mr. DELAHUNT. Ms. Madison, let me suggest to you that, you know, the Government of Haiti is a very fragile government. Its institutions are extremely fragile. Whether they have the capacity to make an accurate assessment, I would suggest, is very much in doubt.

We have a moral obligation to move expeditiously and quickly, and, aside from that, if we want to see a flotilla of refugees coming

from Haiti in a relatively short period of time, we had better move quickly.

I yield back, and I thank the chair for the additional time.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. Payne?

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. Let me also commend you, Rear Admiral Kernan, for the great work that the U.S. Naval Forces, Southern Command, Fourth Fleet, did and the manner in which your men and women serve in a humanitarian way. It makes us very proud of the speedy action that you have done.

I, though, wish that other departments could act speedily, too. It is interesting that Ms. Madison was saying that, well, TPS, after conferring at the State Department, really have not decided on a position, I mean, like it did not come up just a week ago. They having talking about TPS for a long time, and it just seems that, you know, when it comes to Haiti, things just get pushed back.

We had this great Third Border Initiative that President Bush said that he wanted to see because the Caribbean was our third border, and, you know, you have relationships with your border, and you try to enhance it. You are in it together. You are brothers and sisters. You are close by, and we still cannot get the State Department to have a decision. Do you have any idea when they may bring it up?

Ms. MADISON. I am sorry, sir. Specifically, on TPS?

Mr. PAYNE. Yes.

Ms. MADISON. I do not know. Just to clarify something, if I might, Congressman, what I was referring to was taking a position on the question of TPS that has arisen in the aftermath of these storms. I am not aware that we have actually finished our own internal discussion on that issue, although I do note, ultimately, the decision rests with the secretary of Homeland Security.

Mr. PAYNE. Okay. Good. Then I guess we should have them here, but I do get disturbed. I recall, even when Grenada, several years ago, was hit, of course, we did much better for Haiti. We did \$30 million. I think, Grenada, we offered them \$5 million or something like that. Trinidad, initially, offered, I think, \$30 million or \$50 million, just a little island state, said that every house was destroyed, and, here, we felt maybe we could squeeze out five, maybe get up to \$10 million, for Grenada in that terrible hurricane.

Now, people have hurricanes all of the time; however, some are different. They are not all the same, and when every house on Grenada was destroyed, at least the roof was taken off, something was done, and the epidemic proportion that we could do was \$5–10 million for that, it was embarrassing, when an island state said, “We could do maybe four or five times as much as the United States.”

The policies always seem to be so slow to come by, and I really kind of shuddered when I did hear Mr. Cárdenas say that there was a plan with all deliberate speed. Now, I have not heard that since the 1954 Supreme Court decision said they were going to integrate schools with all deliberate speed, and, you know, 60 years later, we still have segregated schools in the United States, by and large.

So that term, “all deliberate speed,” really was something that was put in by the Supreme Court because they said that we do not

have a timetable; it will just be whenever, if it ever comes and can work, and all of that. It is sort of ad infinitum.

So I do hope that, you know, we can move with more than "all deliberate speed" because that means we are not going anywhere, and I do not know if it is just a term. People listen to terms, and they see them differently than those of us who have been trying to get things to work, who find that "all deliberate speed" means that there is really no solution, and I agree with Mr. Delahunt, as he leaves, on the Georgia situation, where the \$1 billion came up.

I was at that hearing, and, you know, it was something that we just decided we are going to do, we are going to do it now, we are going to do it because it is important, it is in our best interests, and it is something that we feel close to, but when it comes to Haiti—if we had left Haiti alone, we would just say, "Well, you know, they messed up themselves, and that is their problem," but we ran Haiti for the last 100 years. We ran the country. We had our Marines that collected taxes and stayed in there forever, and we said Papa Doc was good for us, and Baby Doc was good for us, and Aristide, we had to knock him out because he was just truly elected by the people.

So it is not a place that we have had nothing to do with. Much of the problems that they are having, even the erosion: During World War II, we insisted that they try to grow rubber trees, and the Haitian agricultural said, "It won't work. We can't grow rubber trees here in Haiti. The soil is not good."

So what did they do? They cut down all of the mahogany, cut down stuff, and the United States tried to grow rubber trees in Haiti, and it did not work because the Pacific region was cut off from the United States in World War II, that was a terrible situation for our country, and that was what we decided to do in Haiti.

That is when, if you look back in history, that is when the erosion began. That is when we introduced foreign agriculture that their forests started this erosion. The final thing is that if something is not done to turn it around, you are going to have an island of 8 million people that is going to go somewhere because it is going to be denuded, the topsoil will be gone.

Each year, the amount of topsoil that goes out into the ocean is unbelievable, and it cannot continue. In another 10 years, there will be nothing there to grow. So what are you going to do? You know, 10 million people are not going to be able to sit on a rock, because that is all that is going to be left.

So, you know, I just hope that we really, at one point, become serious about Haiti. The same storms that hit the Dominican Republic as hit Haiti. As a matter of fact, usually when the get to Haiti, they are of less volume. They are usually less ferocious, and if you take a look at the damage, generally, from that same storm on Haiti, as opposed to the D.R., it is like night and day because the D.R. has been able to prevent the denuding and prevent all of these things that Haiti cannot defend itself against.

So I really do not have any question, but, in the same line of Mr. Delahunt and the panel that came before, I just hope, Mr. Chairman, that we can really get some serious kind of situation as it relates to Haiti.

I see Mr. Burton here, so I will just stop, and maybe he has something to say. Thank you very much.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Payne. As you noted, the ranking member, Mr. Burton, is here, and I would like to give him the opportunity to either make a statement or to ask some questions. Mr. Burton?

Mr. BURTON. Well, Mr. Chairman, I apologize for my tardiness. There is kind of an emergency that is emanating from my office, and, as a result, I am not going to be able to stay now either, but I wanted to come down and let you know that I want to work with you and my colleague down there who is so eloquent to solve or address any problems that Haiti has encountered as a result of the hurricane and other severe problems.

So my staff person is here. She is going to brief me on everything that is said, and I will look forward to working with you, maybe even to go back to Haiti and take a hard look at everything that is going on. So I apologize for my absence, but it is something that is unavoidable.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Burton follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DAN BURTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA

I would like to thank the Chairman for holding today's hearing on the current disaster relief efforts in Haiti. The U.S. is the largest provider of bilateral foreign assistance to Haiti and we have held multiple hearings on Haiti in the past two years, including an appearance by Wyclef Jean who testified in front of this Subcommittee in March of 2007 regarding his impressive program for Haitian children that combines schooling, soccer and afterschool study. I would like to welcome those of you here today to discuss how we can achieve better success in helping Haiti during this devastating time.

Haiti is one of the most difficult challenges in our hemisphere. Successive efforts by our government, other nations and international bodies focused on helping Haitians reach an average living standard have failed, and it is challenging to determine how to best adjust our method to achieve a greater benefit in the future.

There is very little that remains consistent in Haiti besides turbulence and change. In the past two years Haiti experienced a change in the presidency, a food shortage that culminated in the ousting of the Haitian Prime Minister, essentially paralyzing the government, and a Tropical Storm and Hurricane that ravished the country side.

Throughout such turbulence, international efforts to improve the situation in Haiti have continued unabated. The United Nations, the U.S. State Department, USAID, non governmental organizations, foreign governments and private investors continue to send aid, build roads, schools and homes, and develop investment strategies to provide long term benefits.

The remaining problem, and what I hope we discuss today, is Haiti's ability to fully absorb the funds and program assets in a way that provides sustainable developments. In the end, it is the Haitian government, leaders and people who have to make Haiti the better place we all hope to see it become.

As I said last week at the hearing we held on Foreign Assistance in the Americas, ensuring that the most effective method is used to distribute foreign aid is not only beneficial to the nations receiving our donations, but is an obligation we owe to the hard working American people who provide the government with these funds. And in these trying times that can not be emphasized enough.

With these important challenges before us, I'd like to thank our distinguished panelists for being here today, and I look forward to hearing from you on this important topic.

Mr. ENGEL. Well, thank you, Mr. Burton. I am sure we will do that together, the way we have done so many things together.

I want to thank the panel. It was very enlightening. Any follow-up questions, we will certainly submit to all of you, and I appreciate your coming here to testify. So I will dismiss the second panel

now and call on our third panel, which is one witness, call on him in a minute.

Okay. For our third panel, let me call up Councilman Mathieu Eugene, Ph.D., who is a member of the New York City Council, who has contacted me, and we have spoken a number of times about the situation in Haiti, and he is also a constituent of Congresswoman Clarke and, in fact, replaced her in the New York City Council when she was elected to Congress.

So, Dr. Eugene, we are very happy to have you here. I am always happy to see another friend from New York City. Dr. Eugene represents a district in the New York City Council from Brooklyn, New York, and, although I am from the Bronx, we have a lot in common with our neighbors in Brooklyn, and, Dr. Eugene is, as he will explain, I am sure, a native of Haiti and represents a large community in Brooklyn, New York, of Haitian-Americans. So I believe he will give us a very interesting perspective on what has happened in Haiti and the devastation and the impact on the people there. Dr. Eugene?

STATEMENT OF MATHIEU EUGENE, PH.D., MEMBER, NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

Mr. EUGENE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the opportunity that you gave me to be allowed to testify before this most important body. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chair, members of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee for Foreign Affairs, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am Mathieu Eugene, a New York City Council member, and I am so proud in order to be able to testify today. I humbly come before you not only as a council member of the good City of New York representing the 40th District but also as an American of Haitian descent, with strong ties to the country of Haiti and the Haitian Diaspora.

Mr. Chairman, few people today can trace their ancestry back to a physical American nation but, rather, to an American ideal. The words proclaimed on the Statue of Liberty, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses who yearn to breathe free," are more than just words; they represent the kind of people we in America aspire to be.

I am proud, Mr. Chairman, to serve in a city which has embraced diversity, which marks our nation, and has elected representatives who demonstrate that sentiment. While we are all Americans, we understand in our hearts that while we were fortunate enough to make the journey to this wonderful place, there are many who were left behind. To fully understand, to fully appreciate what has become of this dream called "America," we are taught never to lose sight of where we come from and what might have been.

As Americans, we define our people differently. We do not classify ourselves as people because of an attachment to a common place of origin but, rather, a common sense of fairness, justice, and equity of opportunity. There was a time when America believed in isolationism, but, with our maturation, now we understand that we have a moral obligation to share the success of our democratic experiment with those less fortunate.

I am being asked by my Haitian brethren, both here and in Haiti, to ensure that the American people have a full under-

standing of the seriousness of their current situation. The Haitian people are proud people, but not too proud to put their families and loved ones at risk by not asking for the help they need.

The Haitian community has been extremely fortunate to receive not only kind words but also substantive assistance from many friends, such as Governor Paterson, Senator Clinton, Senator Schumer, and my longtime friend, Representative Clarke. Let me commend Representative Waters, Representative Weiner; the Congressional Black Caucus under the leadership of Representative Kilpatrick; and Representative Meek for leading the emergency congressional delegation to survey the damage in Haiti. I would also like to thank the Representative Rangel for his ongoing commitment and support to Haiti, and all of the Members of the U.S. Congress, the Senate representatives in New York and my colleagues in the New York City Council who have worked tirelessly in this effort.

Let me tell you that, in New York, we have a very strong coalition made up of elected officials, clergy people, and also community leaders. We are trying to make a very powerful food drive to send to Haiti. The governor of New York has opened the Ammo on Bedford Avenue, and we are expecting to have a plan from the government to ship the supplies to Haiti.

Yesterday, I met with Haiti's President, Rene Preval, who explained in detail that the nation's top priority is restoring its basic infrastructure. President Preval insisted that, "besides food, water, and medicine, the number one priority is emergency bridges," and he said, again, "the number two priority is emergency bridges, and the number three priority is still emergency bridges." While we, in America, collect food, water, and medical supplies, without the roads and bridges to transport them to those who need it most, the situation will continue to deteriorate.

President Preval explained that "the lack of adequate humanitarian relief will lead to famine, widespread disease, and a bleak, long-term future." According to President Preval, this should have been a time of harvest for the Haitian people, but, unfortunately, the storms came. Before the series of storms hit, the Haitian people were waiting to harvest crops which would have helped them through the food crisis the country was already in. The rice plantations of Artibonite, the country's primary source of rice, were mostly destroyed. When the flood receded, it left up to a meter of mud in some areas, burying food, crops, clothing, livestock, and, most tragically, people.

He also stated that \$120 million in agricultural investments were wiped out by the storms; \$100 million in banana profits were lost; between 500 to 600 people have died; a power plant which generated one megahertz of power, sufficient to power a large segment of the country, was destroyed; and 800,000 of Haiti's 8-9 million have been affected by this series of storms.

Yesterday, I also met with the mayor of Gonaives, Jean-Francois Adolphe, who stated that, with a population of 300,000 people in Gonaives, 250,000 are now homeless. Look at the extent of damage one storm has made in the United States of America this season in the Gulf Coast, where we had the capacity to evacuate and prepare for the devastating storm. In Haiti, there was no evacuation

capability, no adequate shelter, and they were at the mercy of four horrific storms. Thousands of women have vaginal infections from the flood waters.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the consequences will be even worse than what we have seen if there is not a concerted effort to avert widespread disease and famine in the coming months.

It is of utmost importance for the United States to address the plight of the Haitian people. Just a few hundred miles off the coast of Florida, children are literally starving. The lack of quality healthcare and clean drinking water affects their basic ability to lead normal life. I am here today to say it loud and clear and for the record that the 8–9 million people of Haiti need America's help now.

My colleagues and I are calling on the President of the United States to use his executive authority to grant Haitian nationals Temporary Protection Status. In the New York City Council, I have introduced Resolution 1595, which supports H.R. 522 and asks for Haitian nationals currently here in America to be granted TPS.

It is my hope that the President of the United States will grant TPS status to the Haitian people.

We hope also that Congress works together to prevent the deportation of people from all countries who have lived within the United States for years and have become an indispensable part of the American society. It is painful to see families broken, children traumatized, and the breakdown of the ability of communities to function. Now, also, it is important that while waiting for the President to sign the TPS, we must come together to stop the deportation of Haitians because Haiti cannot bear the burden.

I recall that Congressman John Lewis of the good State of Georgia said, on his recent trip to Brooklyn, "We might have all gotten here on different ships, but we are all in the same boat." Let us not forget the less fortunate among us. We must work together to ensure that those who are here can have a part of the American dream. Let us understand that, as the beneficiaries of the great American experiment, we must heed the call of the "huddled masses who yearn to breathe free."

Mr. Chair and members of this distinguished subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity. It is my hope that, as we work together, we will help Haiti to overcome this difficult period and become a sustainable nation in the Western Hemisphere. Thank you very much. God bless you all and bless America.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Eugene follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MATHIEU EUGENE, PH.D., MEMBER, NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman:

Members of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee on Foreign Affairs, Ladies and Gentlemen:

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As Americans, we define our people differently. We do not classify ourselves as a people because of an attachment to a common place of origin but rather a common sense of fairness, justice, and equity of opportunity. There was a time when America believed in isolationism, but with our maturation now we understand that we have a moral obligation to share the success of our democratic experiment with those less fortunate.

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President Preval explained that, “the lack of adequate humanitarian relief will lead to famine, widespread disease, and a bleak long-term future.” According to the President, this should have been a time of harvest for the Haitian people but unfortunately the storms came. Before the series of storms hit, the Haitian people were waiting to harvest crops, which would have helped them through the food crisis the country was already in. The rice plantations of Latibonite, the country’s primary source of rice, were mostly destroyed. When the floods receded, it left up to a meter of mud in some areas burying food, crops, clothing, livestock, and most tragically—people.

He also stated that:

- \$120 million in agricultural investments were wiped out by the storms
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- Between 500–600 people have died nation-wide
- A power plant which generated 1 megawatt of power, sufficient to power a large segment of the country was destroyed
- 800,000 of Haiti’s 8 million have been affected by the series of storms (1 tenth of Haiti’s population)

Yesterday, I also met with the Mayor of Gonaives, Jean-Francois Adolphe who stated that:

- With a population of 300,000 in Gonaives 250,000 are now homeless.
- The floodwaters destroyed the only hospital within the city, swept away and drowned most of its patients in the process

Look at the extent one storm has had in the United States of America, this season in the Gulf Coast, where we had the capability to evacuate and prepare for the devastating storm.

In Haiti, there was no evacuation capability, no adequate shelter and they were at the mercy of four horrific storms.

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Mr. Chairman and members of this distinguished subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity, it is my hope that as we work together, we will help Haiti to overcome this difficult period and become a sustainable nation in the western hemisphere.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you very much, Councilman. Let me ask you just a couple of questions, and then I will ask Mr. Payne if he has got anything to ask.

You heard our congressional colleagues speak before, very eloquently, six of them here, who all basically said the same thing, but talked about a lot of different things. A few mentioned the TPS, which you have just talked about yourself in full agreement.

Is there anything that any of our congressional Members said in testimony that you would like to expand or speak on or emphasize, other than TPS because TPS is certainly important, but is there something specifically that some of our colleagues said that, through your experience and your contacts with people back in Haiti, you would like to emphasize?

Mr. EUGENE. Yes. I would like to make some comments about the deforestation. The deforestation, I believe, is a cause of the economic situation of the country.

Because of the lack of electricity, the people do not have the technology or the structure of what they need to fulfill the basic need, like cooking food. They have to cut the trees to cook the food, and also the charcoal that they use, they make some money from that. It is an economic opportunity.

I believe we should think also about creating some job opportunities in the country, giving to the people the opportunity to be self-sufficient and to prevent them to cut the trees, and, as we know, cutting trees is very important. But if we think only about cutting trees, this is not going to resolve the situation.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. I am glad that, even though we did not coordinate it, I am glad that you mentioned the issue because it is

an issue that I raised that I feel very strongly about, and I think that, long term, we really need to find a solution for it.

Let me ask you one final question. You mentioned, in your testimony, that if we did not repair the bridges, or have temporary bridges, that we will not be able to distribute the food. Is it your understanding that a number of the bridges that are needed to distribute food to the outlying areas have been repaired, even on a temporary basis, or is there still much work to be done?

Mr. EUGENE. There is still much work to be done. I met with President Preval yesterday, and he said that clearly. I asked him, "What is priority number one for Haiti right now?" He said, "Priority number one, besides food, water, and medicine, is emergency bridges," and he said again, "priority number two is emergency bridges," and he kept on going until priority number seven is also emergency bridges because he said that there is no way to communicate from one part of the country to the other part. Even if we have food, we have water, we have medicine, there is no way to bring the food and the medicine and water to the people who need them.

One of my friends told me that somebody died in Haiti. Do you know why? Because he was sick, and there is no way to help him get to the hospital, and he stayed in the house. After he died, they had to wait about 3 or 4 days to bury him because of no communication between one part of the country to the other one.

As President Preval said, it is very important that we make an effort to create or to construct emergency bridges in the different parts of the country.

Mr. ENGEL. You mentioned that you were working with people in New York to get a plane to bring food and supplies to Haiti. How do we ensure that when we bring the food and supplies and medicines to Haiti, it gets to the people who really need it? I know bridges, obviously.

What assurance do we have that some groups are not going to seize it, attack it, sell it, whatever, that it really gets to the impoverished people that need it? Has that been a problem, in your experience in the past, and, if so, what are we doing about it?

Mr. EUGENE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is a wonderful question and one that raised the concern of all of us: Will people of goodwill want to help Haiti? The reason that I met with many of the elected officials in New York and community leaders is we are trying to build up a coalition, and the reason also that I requested the governor of New York to try to secure a plane for us. By sending the food by plane, the plane will not go to the customs, and we are working together with the Haitian Government, and I am pleased to see the Ambassador raise the issue also; we are working together.

What we are doing, when the food gets to Haiti, we have already contacted many organizations in Haiti, like Catholic Charity Relief, Red Cross, World Vision, and churches in Haiti, and many local organizations, in order for them to take the food and bring them exactly to the people in need.

This is a very big concern. We thought about it, and we are working collectively to try to resolve it because it is not fair, it does not make sense, and it is not acceptable to see that we are making

so much effort over here and sacrifices, and when the food or the supplies get to Haiti, the people who are in need do not get it.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. Mr. Payne?

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you. I will be very brief, but thank you, Councilman, for bringing that message to us. We will be looking forward to working with you and others in our state. We have very active Haitian-American groups also, and working through the Catholic Church and others. So we will be coordinating with our chairman.

You know, one of the things that we are talking about, as relates to cooking and the question of reforestation, which has got to go soon, or we are going to be in trouble, but we are looking at, believe it or not, in Africa, in Darfur, solar types of cooking utensils, therefore, not needing any kind of fuel like charcoal, and wood, of course, in the Darfur region is very scarce also.

So we are introducing this very simple, solar-cooking apparatus, and that may be something that I would like to talk with some of your folks to see about introducing it. It is very inexpensive, and it can actually replace the need for charcoal. So it is something that I would like to follow up with.

Mr. EUGENE. Thank you very much, Congressman. This is a wonderful idea. Haiti is a tropical country. That means that we can use that technology, and that would be very helpful and very useful to Haiti.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you very much, Dr. Eugene. We appreciate your testimony, and I know, when you are organizing things in New York, in Brooklyn, I know you are going to go to all of the communities. I want to mention again that I have a very large Haitian-American community in Spring Valley, New York, in Rockland County, and I hope that you are coordinating things with them. I know they want to help as well.

Again, we thank you very, very much for your testimony. It certainly was very, very helpful in giving us a full picture about what is really going on.

Mr. EUGENE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the opportunity, and thank you for your leadership and what you are doing for the Haitian community. Thank you very much.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, and it is my pleasure.

As you can hear, we are now being called for a vote, and so the hearing on Haiti is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:25 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ROBERT WEXLER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for holding this hearing to discuss the growing humanitarian crises in Haiti. It is apparent to anyone who cares deeply about the health and well-being of our Caribbean neighbor Haiti that they are facing an unprecedented crisis in the wake of several hurricanes and other natural disaster.

First and foremost, I want to offer my sincere condolences to those Haitian families who are currently observing three days of mourning for loved ones who perished during and following the hurricanes. It is critical that the United States stand with the Haitian people at this difficult time and provide the disaster assistance the Haitian government is seeking.

Like my colleagues from South Florida Congressman Alcee Hastings and Congressman Kendrick Meek who are testifying today, I am privileged to represent a significant Haitian-American community. I share their grave concerns about the plight of Haitians and the need for a greater humanitarian and economic response from the United States and the international community. According to the United Nations, a staggering one-tenth of the entire Haitian population (800,000 people) is in immediate need of emergency assistance.

The deadly storms that have hit Haiti have wrought unimaginable destruction, and this destruction is on top of a food crisis earlier this year and years of political and economic struggle. With more than 45,000 homes damaged or destroyed, close to 500 killed, hundreds of thousands internally displaced, we are talking about a tragedy beyond any scale that the Haitian government is capable of managing on its own. Already the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, the extent of the flooding, damage, displacement and despair in Haiti calls for immediate assistance from the United States and others.

To that end, I urge the Administration to heed the call of Congress to significantly increase disaster assistance for Haiti. It is my hope that the Administration will heed my request and that of my colleagues including Congresswoman Waters to provide up to \$300 million in assistance for Haiti. I also want to join Congressman Hastings in urging the U.S. Customs and Immigration Service to immediately cease the deportation of Haitians, and calling for the Administration to provide them Temporary Protective Status. At a time when Haiti is reeling from death and destruction, it is unacceptable that the Administration is deporting Haitians back to a country that is devastated and unable to care for them.

Chairman Engel, I am certain that today's hearing will shed light on the disastrous situation in Haiti and will provide a roadmap to address the many humanitarian and economic needs of the Haitian people. The plight of Haiti and its people deserves greater attention in Washington, and I hope all of my colleagues will join me in acknowledging the need to increase disaster assistance, provide Temporary Protective Status to Haitians facing deportation, and help Haiti rebuild its communities for long-term stability and security.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ANTHONY WEINER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

HELPING HAITI RECOVER

Mr. Chairman, a few hundred miles from the southern tip of Florida, the people of Haiti are suffering, and primarily from circumstances outside of their control. Poverty, hunger and homelessness are widespread. Jobs are scarce and access to even the most basic medical care is rare.

But on top of these day-to-day challenges, the people of Haiti spent almost the entire month of August battling storm after storm after storm. Hurricanes Gustav, Hanna, and Ike as well as tropical storm Fay waged an unrelenting fury of wind and rain on this calm, tropical island.

The wreckage of these storms is undeniable and absolutely human. More than 150,000 Haitians have been displaced from their homes and communities. More than 100,000 are living in shelters. Acres of rice, the primary staple of the country, have been flooded; farming and construction equipment has been destroyed; bridges and roads wiped out. In all approximately 850,000 Haitians had their lives uprooted by these storms. And more than 400 people have died. And these are just initial numbers.

The United States has a political, economic, and, most importantly, a moral obligation to step forward and help the people of Haiti—not only in the short term, but into the future.

In the short term, we need to help Haitians without food, medical care, housing, and basic supplies. I strongly support the \$200 million in aid the United States government has provided thus far. These are resources that will go directly to feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, and housing the homeless.

I also want to praise the individuals and countries who stepped up in a time of need to contribute millions of dollars to ease this humanitarian crisis.

But as we feed and clothe and house, we also need to think beyond this crisis. Now is the time to invest resources to help stabilize Haitian economic and political structure, protect its farms, and employ its people. I proudly join my colleagues in supporting an emergency appropriation of \$100 million for disaster assistance.

These resources will help the Western hemisphere's poorest country rebuild roads, bridges, and other critical infrastructure. These projects will provide jobs and stability to a region that has been devastated. This is a smart investment. But more importantly, it is the right thing to do. Together, we can help Haitian people overcome these challenging times.



BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

Haiti – Storms

Fact Sheet #8, Fiscal Year (FY) 2008

September 18, 2008

Note: The last fact sheet was dated September 17, 2008.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- On September 17, the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART) water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) specialist traveled to Gonaïves with U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention staff to survey the current situation and prepare for a second visit scheduled to take place during the weekend of September 19. According to the USAID/DART WASH specialist, while water continues to recede in Gonaïves, up to a meter of mud in several areas continues to hinder access to numerous shelters in Gonaïves that have yet to be reached by relief staff.
- The total value of U.S. Government (USG) humanitarian assistance in response to recent storms is nearly \$30 million.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
Total Affected Population	850,000	GOH ¹ – September 15, 2008
Dead	423	OCHA ² – September 15, 2008
Missing	50	GOH – September 11, 2008
IDPs ³	151,072	GOH – September 10, 2008
IDPs in Shelters	111,391	OCHA – September 15, 2008
Other Damage	10,842 houses destroyed, 35,125 houses damaged	GOH – September 11, 2008

FY 2008 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO DATE FOR HAITI HURRICANES IN 2008

USAID/OFDA Assistance ⁴	\$9,800,000
USAID/FFP ⁵ Assistance ⁶	\$14,000,000
USAID/Haiti Assistance	\$5,000,000
DOD ⁷ Assistance	\$659,000
DHS ⁸ Assistance	Amount Forthcoming
Total USG Humanitarian Assistance to Haiti for Hurricanes in 2008	\$29,459,000

CURRENT SITUATION

- Despite increased transportation assets and improvements in food and relief distribution in many parts of the country, multiple relief agencies note that a number of communities remain inaccessible, including areas situated in the corridor between Gonaïves and Cap-Haïtien, Cote de Fer, Bainet, and Marigot, Southeast Department, as well as Plaisance, L'Asile, Anse à Veau, and Petit Trou de Nippes, Nippes Department. As humanitarian assessments have yet to be conducted in these communities, the humanitarian situation remains unclear.
- According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), recent storms have affected approximately 80 percent of the population in Gonaïves, representing 240,000 people. To date, 30 percent of Gonaïves remains inaccessible. IOM staff noted that while other parts of Haiti may soon begin to transition to the early recovery phase of the humanitarian response, many areas of Gonaïves require continued critical emergency humanitarian interventions.

Access

- According to the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), sufficient transportation assets are available to access coastal areas and stockpile food assistance in Cap-Haïtien, Port de Paix, Gonaïves, Jeremie, Les Cayes, and Port au Prince.

¹ Government of Haiti (GOH)

² U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

³ Internally displaced persons (IDPs)

⁴ This amount includes actual assistance provided and funds allocated for forthcoming assistance as of September 18, 2008.

⁵ USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP)

⁶ This amount does not include previous USAID/FFP contributions in response to other emergencies in FY 2008.

⁷ U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)

⁸ U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

WFP notes that additional resources required to transport assistance by sea can easily be contracted if necessary. However, damaged and destroyed roads and infrastructure are hindering access to the interior of the country. WFP reports that roads may not reopen for at least several weeks.

- Four helicopters provided by WFP are scheduled to begin operations on September 25, which will facilitate the access to interior areas.
- According to the USAID/DART, U.S. Navy teams identified two possible sites in Cote de Fer, five sites in and around Bainet, and an additional four sites in Belle Anse for future deliveries of emergency relief supplies to isolated areas.

Emergency Food Assistance

- According to OCHA, a total of 1,042 metric tons (MT) of food aid has been distributed as of September 17, reaching more than 245,000 people.
- As of September 17, WFP had distributed 316 MT of food, including 27 MT of high energy biscuits, to nearly 152,000 people in Gonaïves, according to OCHA.

Shelter

- According to OCHA, approximately more than 111,000 IDPs are residing in shelters throughout Haiti. IOM reports that an estimated 50,000 IDPs remain in shelters in Gonaïves. IOM notes crowding in shelters, with a number of shelters housing up to 4,000 IDPs.
- OCHA reports that all shelters in Les Cayes, South Department, had closed as of September 16. In Nippes Department, ten shelters remain operational, according to OCHA.
- IOM is currently coordinating with GOH officials and relief agencies to define a strategy to improve shelter conditions.
- USAID/OFDA is providing funds to IOM to support shelter and settlements activities.

WASH

- During a September 16 shelter cluster meeting, IOM noted the need for adequate sanitation in shelters in Gonaïves. While a major disease outbreak has not occurred, IOM reported that diarrhea has affected more than 50 percent of IDPs in shelters in Gonaïves.
- USAID/OFDA has committed more than \$400,000 to implementing partner World Vision to support WASH activities, benefiting more than 56,000 people.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE SUMMARY

Haiti

- On September 2, U.S. Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson issued a disaster declaration in response to Hurricane Gustav and resulting flooding throughout Haiti. In total, the USAID/DART is working to program nearly \$10 million in funding from USAID/OFDA for programs to assist disaster-affected populations in Haiti.
- On September 4, a USAID/OFDA-chartered aircraft arrived in Port au Prince, delivering USAID/OFDA emergency relief supplies including 5,088 hygiene kits, 10,800 ten-liter water containers, and 500 rolls of plastic sheeting. Worth nearly \$335,000 including transport, the supplies were transported to affected areas with assistance from the U.S. Coast Guard and implementing partner IOM. On September 11, a second USAID/OFDA-chartered aircraft arrived with 10,200 ten-liter water containers, 5,088 hygiene kits, 700 rolls of plastic sheeting, and 2 water bladders, valued at more than \$410,000, including transport. This airlift will benefit more than 5,000 families and provide shelter support for temporary facilities such as child-friendly spaces.
- USAID/OFDA is providing \$500,000 to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in response to PAHO's appeal for funding to support health activities for individuals affected by Hurricane Gustav and Tropical Storm Hanna. This funding will assist 10,000 people.
- USAID/OFDA is committing \$2 million to WFP to augment logistical capacity for delivery of humanitarian aid to affected areas.
- USAID/OFDA has also committed \$750,000 to implementing partner World Vision to support the distribution of emergency relief supplies and WASH activities, benefiting nearly 70,000 people.
- USAID/OFDA is also contributing more than \$1.5 million to IOM. This assistance will support shelter and settlements projects as well as humanitarian coordination activities.
- USAID/OFDA is providing \$500,000 in funding to the American Red Cross for emergency relief supplies and logistical support. Programs supported by this funding will benefit 12,000 people in Haiti's Artibonite, Grand Anse, and South East departments.
- On September 7, USAID/OFDA authorized the deployment of a three-person Americas Support Team to Haiti to supplement the U.N. Disaster Assessment and Coordination team based in Gonaïves.

Haiti Storms – September 18, 2008

- USAID/Haiti is working to re-direct \$5 million in funds toward food and other assistance to meet critical needs related to the growing humanitarian crisis.
- USAID/FFP is providing an additional \$7 million in response to the U.N. flash appeal. The contribution will enable WFP and private volunteer organization (PVO) partners to respond to relief and recovery food aid needs in Haiti. To date, USAID/FFP has contributed a total of \$14 million for the U.N. flash appeal.
- To date, DOD is providing support worth nearly \$660,00 in response to a USAID request for helicopter transport. The contribution does not include fuel cost for the USS Kearsarge.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI FOR HURRICANES IN 2008

Implementing Partner	Activity	Location	Amount
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
American Red Cross	Logistics, Emergency Relief Supplies	Artibonite, Grand Anse, and South East Departments	\$500,000
IOM	Shelter and Settlements, Coordination	Affected Areas	\$1,506,008
OCHA	Logistics	Affected Areas	\$69,996
PAHO	Health	Affected Areas	\$500,000
USAID/Haiti	Emergency Relief Supplies	Affected Areas	\$150,000
	Emergency Relief Activities ²	Affected Areas	\$3,530,882
USAID/Haiti	Emergency Relief Supplies, Including Transportation	Affected Areas	\$749,015
WFP	Logistics	Affected Areas	\$2,000,000
World Vision	Logistics, WASH	Affected Areas	\$750,000
	Administrative Support		\$44,099
TOTAL USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI IN FY 2008			\$9,800,000
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE³			
WFP and PVOs	P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Affected Areas	\$14,000,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI IN FY 2008			\$14,000,000
USAID/HAITI ASSISTANCE⁴			
	Emergency Relief Activities	Affected Areas	\$5,000,000
TOTAL USAID/HAITI HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI IN FY 2008			\$5,000,000
DOB ASSISTANCE¹			
	Emergency Relief Activities	Affected Areas	\$659,000
TOTAL DOB HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI IN FY 2008			\$659,000
DHS ASSISTANCE			
	Transportation and Logistics	Affected Areas	FORTHCOMING
TOTAL DHS HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI IN FY 2008			\$0
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI FOR HURRICANES IN FY 2008			\$29,459,000

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 18, 2008.² Additional funding pledged by USAID/OFDA.³ Funding reprogrammed from development to humanitarian relief activities.⁴ Funding approved for humanitarian relief activities in Haiti.

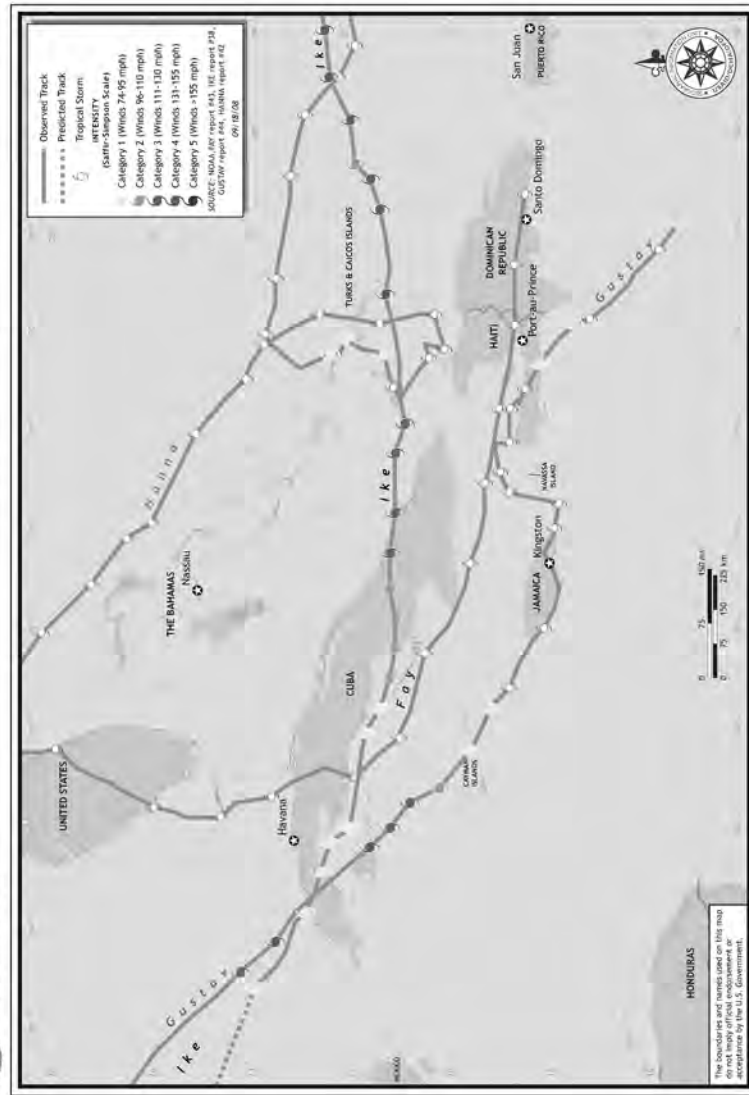
PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. Information on organizations responding to the humanitarian situation in Latin America and the Caribbean may be available at www.reliefweb.int.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, warehouse space, etc); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID: www.usaid.gov – Keyword: Donations
 - The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidr.org or (703) 276-1914
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int

USAID/OFDA bulletins appear on the USAID web site at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/



2008 HURRICANES IN THE CARIBBEAN







Testimony by
John Sanbrailo
Executive Director
Pan American Development Foundation (PADF)
Before the House Foreign Affairs Committee
Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere

Hearing on:
The Hurricanes in Haiti: Disaster and Recovery
September 23, 2008

Summary for the Subcommittee

The Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), a non-profit, non-governmental organization with its headquarters in Washington, D.C., has a 47-year history of creating economic and social opportunities for the hemisphere's most disadvantaged people. PADF also acts as the disaster relief arm of the Organization of American States (OAS), which is the region's principal multilateral forum for strengthening democracy, promoting human rights and confronting shared problems. PADF's unique relationship with the OAS allows for exceptional access to leaders and organizations in the region and facilitates rapid implementation of technical assistance and material donations in furtherance of the purposes and principles set out in the OAS Charter.

For consideration by the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, PADF would like to summarize its testimony:

1. The U.S. government, many companies and non-governmental organizations should be commended for taking quick action to reduce the suffering caused by these four-in-a-row natural disasters that slammed our Caribbean neighbor.
2. Despite these efforts, the situation in Haiti is dire and will only get worse without additional and sustained aid by the international community. With the United States facing a financial crisis, we cannot let institutional and individual donor fatigue happen. This would result in a man-made catastrophe for Haitians.

3. Without short-term relief and mid-term redevelopment assistance, food riots will re-emerge and political instability will most likely follow. We need to work as a team to ensure Haiti's economic livelihood.
4. Watershed management and protection must be among the highest priorities for Haiti and the international community.
5. Cooperation and collaboration among donors is essential in making a successful and long-lasting reconstruction.
6. Hurricane season happens every year. Although we are better able to anticipate these destructive forces, this does not mitigate their effects. We need to prepare now for next year's natural disasters. Every \$1 spent on disaster mitigation saves society \$4.
7. High-risk areas must be evaluated by all interested parties, classified as to whether they are suitable for redevelopment and, if not, then those residents should be relocated to safer locations. We believe in saving people's lives by not placing them in harm's way.

PADF: A Leader in Hemispheric Development

On behalf of PADF and its Board of Trustees, which is chaired by OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza, I would like to thank Subcommittee Chairman Engel and his colleagues for the opportunity to provide testimony on Haiti the aftermath of four natural disasters.

Prior to joining PADF as the Executive Director in 1999, I served with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Latin America, including as Mission Director in Ecuador, Peru, Honduras and El Salvador. I am very familiar with the challenges the professionals at USAID face during natural disasters, as I was in their seats in similar situations.

In my role as Executive Director, I oversee one of the leading non-governmental organizations with an exclusive focus on Latin America and the Caribbean. PADF, which receives grants from USAID, the World Bank and others, has major programs in Colombia, Haiti, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Central America and other countries.

PADF's work focuses on three key areas:

1. Providing sustainable economic and social opportunities
2. Strengthening individuals, communities and societies in accordance with the Inter-American Democratic Charter
3. Providing for disaster relief and mitigation

In its current fiscal year, PADF has had a positive impact on more than **4.5 million people in 17 countries**.

Speaking specifically to PADF's role in disaster management in the hemisphere, PADF's affiliation with the OAS allows it to send relief supplies to affected communities without paying import duties—which guarantees that more goods arrive to those most in need.

PADF is also a member and implementation partner of the Inter-American Disaster Mitigation Network (a mechanism created by the OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Pan American Health Organization) to ensure institutional coordination of and information sharing about vulnerability reduction, disaster response, prevention and reconstruction. PADF's partnership with the American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America (AACCLA), local chambers and their more than 20,000 members are valuable tools in these endeavors.

In its nearly five decades of work, PADF's disaster management program has evolved to include more than just post-disaster emergency relief. The program collaborates with communities, government authorities, non-government organizations, and the private sector to help countries manage disaster risk through mitigation and prevention activities before disasters occur, and to recover and rebuild after the emergency phase is over.

Over 25 Years of Haiti Development Work

Specifically related to Haiti, PADF has been a development leader for more than 25 years. Its priority areas are: Employment generation; Natural disaster reconstruction and community preparedness; Agricultural development and natural resources management; Rural and urban community-driven development and civil society strengthening; Anti-

trafficking in persons and human rights protection; and Cross-border cooperation among Haitian and Dominican NGOs and municipalities.

PADF's overall objective is to help create a more stable economic, social and physical environment in which Haitians can live a dignified life. PADF's Haiti country office is located in Port-au-Prince. Through field offices in Gonaïves, Thiotte, Anse à Pitres, Belle-Anse, Aquin, Torbeck, Belladère, and Cap-Haïtien, PADF partners with Haitian communities, organizations and governments entities throughout the country.

In addition to its ongoing programs in the country, PADF also joined with musician Wyclef Jean and the Friends of the World Food Program on May 20, 2008, to form a coalition called "Together for Haiti." It has four elements: Targeted food distribution; immediate employment creation; micro-enterprise grants; and agricultural development. After the storms, the Together for Haiti's partners began to collaborate on relief efforts, and they are seeking \$11 million to create new jobs and support agricultural development targeted towards recovery and rebuilding of the most affected areas.

Current Problems and Coordinated Solutions

As the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti is one of the most challenging places to work. Prior to the hurricane season, Haiti was already in trouble. The world's food and energy crises hammered the country, due in part to the fact that it lacks the economic infrastructure and imports most of its necessities.

Haiti's government was just as shaky as the economy. Food riots in April forced the resignation of Prime Minister Jacques-Édouard Alexis. President René Préval worked for months to find a replacement and was about to form a new government when the natural disasters struck. Indeed, despite President Préval's efforts, another round of food riots were taking place just as Hurricane Gustav battered the island.

PADF's Board of Trustees Vice Chairman OAS Assistant Secretary General Albert Ramdin has placed particular emphasis on the political and economic situations in Haiti. Ambassador Ramdin leads the "Friends of Haiti," which is comprised of OAS member nations, multinational organizations and NGOs, to explore and resolve in a holistic manner the problems facing this Caribbean nation.

Ambassador Ramdin traveled to Haiti on September 11 and 12, 2008, to evaluate the storms damage to the island and the recovery efforts. Ambassador Ramdin – who met with René Préval, Prime Minister Michèle Duvivier Pierre-Louis, the United Nations, the Inter-American Development Bank, among others – urged the OAS member states to continue their social and economic support of Haiti. PADF met with Ambassador Ramdin in Haiti to brief him on PADF’s relief efforts to date, which have impacted more than 450,000 people.

PADF’s Response to the Storms

When Hurricane Gustav began to touch Haiti, PADF shifted its Haiti operations to take on that emergency role. Through its network of local offices, PADF was already on the scene when that hurricane struck the southeast coast and severely damaged communities such as Jacmel, Cayes Jacmel and Margoit.

Joe Felix, a disaster relief specialist with PADF, was in Jacmel when Hurricane Gustav roared ashore and was a key source of on-the-spot information about the extent of the destruction:

“I walked 15 kilometers from Jacmel to Cayes Jacmel and Marigot the day after the hurricane (Gustav), identifying people who needed help and taking pictures. Trees here and there on the ground covered with sludge. Rivers flowing inside the cities. Houses were destroyed or still flooded with more than four, five feet of water inside. There was no gas, no food, no water.”

A week later, Hurricane Ike unleashed its fury on the island, this time hitting the coastal city of Gonaïves. With a field office Gonaïves, PADF was prepositioned to provide support and some help. As was the case with the previous storms, PADF worked with the Haitian government, the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, the U.S. Southern Command and other U.S. agencies to alleviate some of the pain and suffering.

While the role of the U.S. government and other international organizations should be commended, I would like to highlight how the private sector stepped in to help Haiti during this crisis. PADF with Chevron created in 2007 a unique program called the Disaster Management Emergency Response Program (DMERP). Other private sector –

including Federal Express, Citigroup, Aeropost, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, General Motors, among others – proactively provided funds and a commitment of services in the event of a natural disaster. When these storms were flooding Haiti, the DMERP was activated. Here are two examples of how the private sector helped Haitians during Hurricanes Gustav and Ike:

- Before Hurricane Gustav was even finished thrashing Haiti, part of Chevron's cash contribution in the DMERP was wired directly to PADF's Haiti country office in Port-au-Prince, which allowed relief workers to immediately purchase local food and water that we call "family packs." That fast response helped nearly 13,000 people in Bainet, Bellanse and Cotes de Fer.
- Meanwhile, a complete shelter package (which includes tents, tarps, water purification tablets, lanterns and more) that was donated by Citi and prepositioned in a warehouse owned by Aeropost was flown from Miami to Haiti by FedEx. That was sent to support the residents of Cabaret.

The private support goes beyond corporations. For example, working with musician Wyclef Jean and his foundation Yelé Haiti, PADF was able to channel more relief to some of the most devastated parts of the country. Through that coordinated effort, more than 42,000 Haitians received food, water and temporary shelter supported.

Haitians stepped up for Haiti, too. The private sector quickly organized an international TV and radio Telethon, which was held on September 14, 2008. This telethon was coordinated by Alliance pour la Gestion des Risques (AGERCA), which included the support of including Voila, Digciel, the American Chamber of Commerce in Haiti, Unibank, Sogebank and Rebo Foundation. As much as \$300,000 was raised during the one-day telethon, as well as collections of clothes, shoes and 40,000 pounds of rice.

Separate from the telethon, PADF launched a U.S. campaign to raise awareness of the plight of Haitians. This included public service announcements, emails, press releases and more. Individuals are encouraged to visit www.PanAmericanRelief.org for information and to make donations. People from around the country provide thousands of dollars in aid for Haiti.

Three members of PADF's Board of Trustees from Haiti – Philippe R. Armand, Reginald Boulous, M.D., and Gladys Coupe – played important roles in raising awareness and funds, as well as providing relief to their fellow Haitians. To date, PADF and its partners have provided emergency support to more than 450,000 Haitians after the storms.

Taken together, the public and private sector endeavors are impressive and should be applauded. However, this help does not go far enough to help this already desperate country. Considering the statistics from the four storms, it is clear that the need is much greater than the relief that has been provided:

- 425 people are dead
- 170,000 people affected
- 151,000 in temporary shelters.
- 63,000 hectares of arable land under water
- \$180 million in estimated losses

Recommendations

First, short-term aid is needed to prevent more misery in the country. Food, water, temporary shelters and basic tools are needed to keep Haiti from sliding further into the abyss.

Second, we must focus on prevention, preparedness and mitigation. The hurricane season in the Caribbean happens every year from June to November. Forecasters this year predicted up to 15 storms in the Atlantic and Caribbean, with as many as eight becoming hurricanes. Since we know that hurricanes will continue to hit Haiti, prevention and preparedness are keys to the country's future success with big storms. This will require the will and resources of international lending institutions and aid organizations in order to be successful.

Third, we must start focusing now on the recovery and reconstruction phases. This requires serious investment and strong, reliable mechanisms to ensure good stewardship of the resources. Whole areas must be cleared and repaired to regain normal life; houses and schools must be rebuilt or rehabilitated; roads and bridges must be

Conclusion

I would like to thank the Chairman of the Subcommittee and his colleagues for organizing this emergency hearing on Haiti. PADF, along with its counterparts at the OAS and the private sector, stands committed to moving Haiti forward after these natural disasters. PADF has been a strong development partner in Haiti with more than 25 years of delivering results. This work extends to providing on-the-ground results immediately after disasters, as well as during the recovery, reconstruction and sustainable development phases so necessary for long-term economic and social development.

Conclusion

I would like to thank the Chairman of the Subcommittee and his colleagues for organizing this emergency hearing on Haiti. PADF, along with its counterparts at the OAS and the private sector, stands committed to moving Haiti forward after these natural disasters. PADF has been a strong development partner in Haiti with more than 25 years of delivering results. This work extends to providing on-the-ground results immediately after disasters, as well as during the recovery, reconstruction and sustainable development phases so necessary for long-term economic and social development.